Democratic participation and political communication in systems of multi-level governance: the case of Germany

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Veröffentlichungsversion / Published Version
Forschungsbericht / research report

BACES
Bamberger
Centrum für
Europäische Studien
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Universität Bamberg

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DEMOCRATIC PARTICIPATION AND POLITICAL COMMUNICATION IN SYSTEMS OF MULTI-LEVEL GOVERNANCE

THE CASE OF GERMANY

BACES Discussion Paper No. 2 (2004)

BACES Discussion Papers

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ISSN: 1614-2594

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Work in Progress 2003-04-08

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1. Aspects of turnout: what the chapter is all about

1.1 Introduction

The first thing of interest after an election is usually not the level of turnout, but the result in terms of which party got most of the votes, which parties lost or won votes compared to the last election and what this means for the future government. Only in the more detailed analyses following the elections turnout comes under scrutiny. At least that is true as long as turnout is within the normal range. Against this background some thoughts should be devoted to the question, why a detailed analysis of electoral participation is of relevance.

The first reason is derived from the discussions in the theories of democracy. The question of what level of turnout is the optimum for a democratic political system is a normative one as Scharpf points out (Scharpf: 21 ff). While in input-oriented theories a high level of participation is crucial to any democracy and therefore of great interest, output-oriented theories are not so concerned about turnout, as the main task of an election according to them is to generate an authorized government. So at least from an output-oriented point of view turnout is not of major interest. This discussion shall not be deepened here, however, it gives a good background to think about the relevance of turnout. As so often the truth might lie somewhere in the middle. The level of participation can be taken as an indicator for political as well as societal developments in a democracy, as a point of departure to search for their reasons. In many cases, more than the pure level of turnout, changes in participation rates call attention among the academics and politicians. Especially the latter are more interested in the practical consequences than in theoretical implications of changes in turnout as these might affect their parties' chances and as a consequence their personal political fate. In the case of declining participation the questions are: Do people from all parts of society stay at home to the same extent, which would not change the chances of the parties? Or does the group of new non-voters consist of people with certain socio-demographic characteristics or attitudes who tended to vote for a certain party earlier? Is the decline in turnout a consequence of fading trust in parties and politicians or can it be interpreted as satisfaction with the current political situation?

This short introduction shows that turnout is a relevant factor in a democracy and that it is worth the effort to analyse it in all its different aspects. In the following these aspects are recalled before a short overview on the rest of the chapter is given.

Turnout varies over countries as becomes very obvious in this book. So the first aspect of turnout is the level in a certain country. As elections in Germany take place at different levels of governance this first aspect includes the different levels of participation in European, federal, state and local elections within Germany, as well. The second aspect of turnout concerns its development over time at all levels of governance. The third aspect is differential turnout in geographical terms and the fourth aspect concerns the question, why some individuals vote while others abstain. It is not always possible to separate these

different aspects analytically. In this chapter all four aspects of turnout will be addressed and by means of analyses of a wide range of data it will be tried to fix some pieces of the turnout puzzle.

1.2 Chapter outline and data

In the first section of the chapter the main focus will lie on the description of turnout in Germany over the 20 years from 1979 to 1999. After giving a short overview over the development of turnout at European, federal and state level we will turn to the description of geographical differences in electoral participation. Following that very descriptive beginning stability and change of turnout will be explored by means of ECOL. Those analyses are based on aggregate data from official statistics of the German Statistical Office for the 440 counties of Germany.

If the description of turnout is like looking at the various pieces of the turnout puzzle, providing explanations for variations in turnout over time, at different levels and with regard to geography is needed to fix at least some pieces of the puzzle. In this book the theoretical approach to an explanation of differential turnout is based on the idea of facilitation and mobilization. Therefore, in the third section of this chapter the German electoral systems at the different levels are considered in terms of these concepts.

The next step is then to find correlates of turnout on an aggregate basis of counties to be able to explain differential geographical turnout. In addition to the data based on the 440 counties for two federal states, Bavaria and North Rhine Westphalia, aggregate data are available at the commune level: 2056 communes in Bavaria and 396 in North Rhine Westphalia. Finally we turn to survey data to investigate the determinants of participation at the individual level. The data sets used are Eurobarometers 41.1, which contains recall of participation in the 1994 European Parliament election, and Eurobarometer 52, which contains the recall for the 1999 European election. In Eurobarometer 54.1 intended electoral participation for the European election of 2004 is included. Beyond the Eurobarometer data the Asia-Europe survey (ASES) provides additional insight in the causes of differential turnout. A short summary of the findings of this chapter and a more comprehensive assessment of the implications of turnout at different levels of governance over the 20 years is provided in the conclusion.

2. General patterns and trends in turnout in Germany

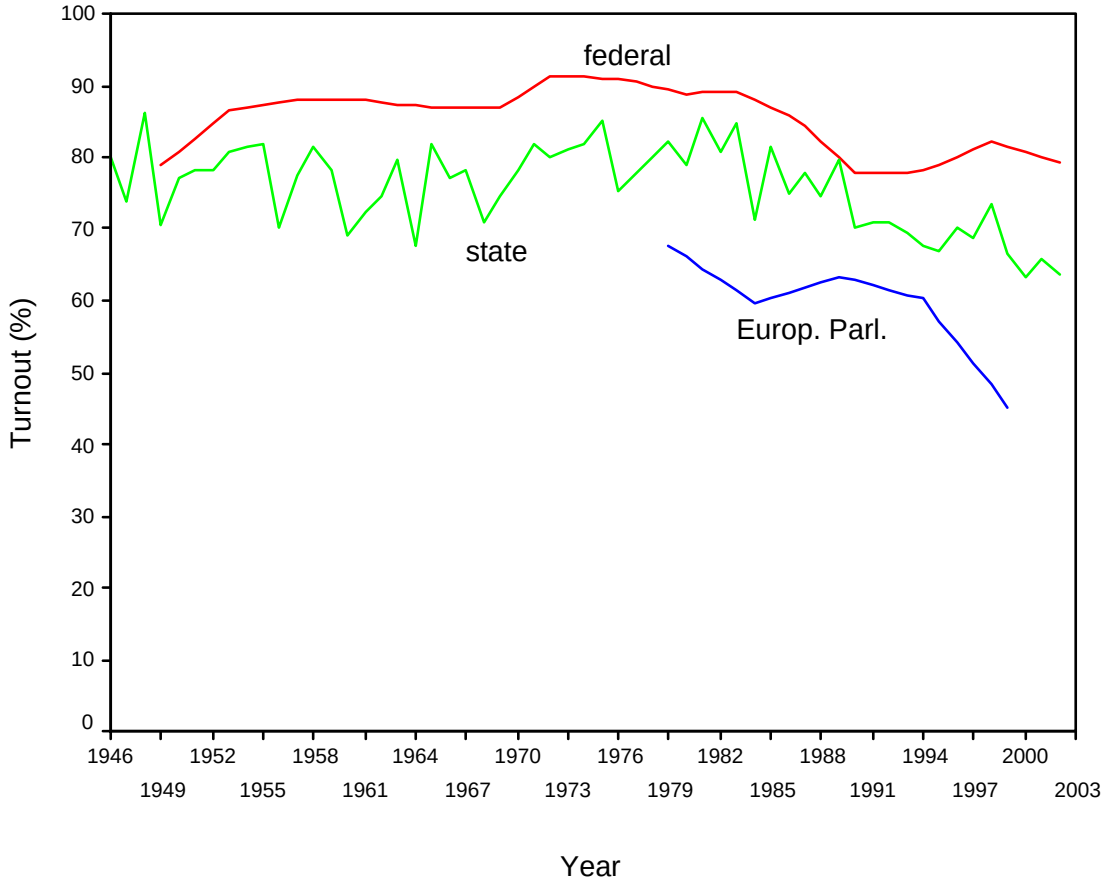
2.1 Turnout at different levels of government from 1979 to 1999

As in many other member states of the EU turnout in Germany traditionally used to be very high compared e.g. to the United States. This applies for federal elections as well as sub-national elections at the state level. The highest turnout in a federal election was reached in 1972 with 91,1% and it kept stable at about 90% until the one of 1983 inclusively (figure 1). However, in the federal election of 1987 and the subsequent elections at national as well as sub-national and supranational level a drop in electoral participation was observed, that worried the political elites as well as parts of the social science academics.

Many explanations for that development have been given, most of which see the most important reason in the dissolution of closed cultural milieus in a modern society. The traditional cleavages of religion and labour that existed in Germany as in most other European countries, began to dissolve and social affiliation becomes less binding in a more and more mobile society. As a consequence social and moral norms, one of them the duty to vote ("Wahlnorm"), lose their importance. This means, that people who went to the polls because of this moral norm,, although not interested, might now prefer to stay home. Others might not see any differences between the parties any longer, as those tend to offer more and more similar party programs to be able to attract the middle class voter. Political scientists agree largely on the analysis so far, not, however, on the assessment of this development. An important question is, how non-voting has to be interpreted. Is it just non-interested people staying at home? Is it worrying then, if people, who do not care about politics, do not vote, or is it just a sensible thing not to vote if not interested and informed? Or has the decline in electoral participation to be seen as a protest against current politics and politicians' behaviour?

The 1998 federal election as well as the latest one in 2002 showed a recovering of turnout at the national level (82.2% in 1998 and 79.1% in 2002). The downward trend has stopped at a level of about 80 percent, which seems to be accepted now as "normal" turnout not worth worrying about.

Figure 1: Turnout in Germany: Federal, state and European elections, 1949 – 2000

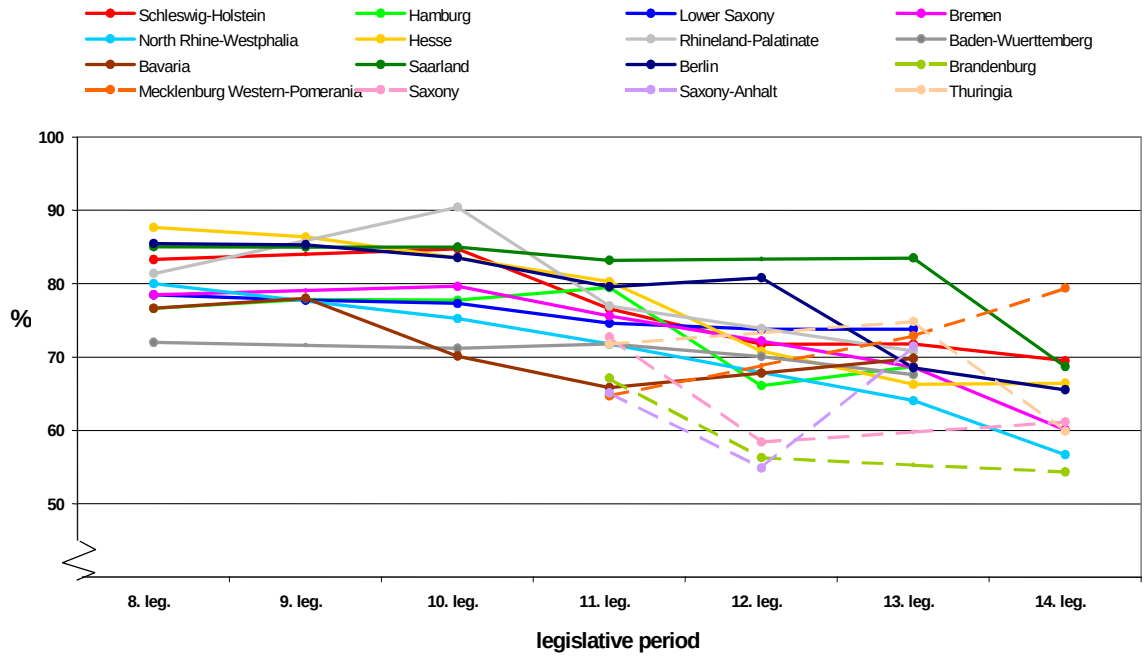


In this chapter we are not only interested in the development of turnout at a certain level of governance, but we are also interested in the question of differential turnout at national, sub-national and supranational levels. To glance at figure 1 shows that there is a turnout gap between federal and sub-national elections of about 10 percentage points on average. Even larger is the difference between federal and European Parliament elections (about 24 percentage points on average) with a substantial widening of the gap if one compares the last elections at both levels. The highest turnout in European elections was reached in the first direct election in 1979 with 65.7 percent. Following the very low participation in 1984 (56.8 percent) turnout rose in 1989 to 62.3 before the 1994 and 1999 European parliament elections brought a substantial decline again. In 1999 an all-time low of only 45.2 percent was reached. These observations induce an additional question: What can explain the differences between the levels, especially the very low level of turnout in European Parliament elections? Different explanations for variations in turnout have been given so far. They will be discussed and tested with our data below.

2.2 Geographical differences in turnout

A second glance at figure 1 might raise the question, why the graph for the state elections is so uneven and oscillating over the years. That leads to an important aspect of the research on turnout: geographical differences. The Länder-graph shows the mean turnout in state elections per year. At least some of the relatively large variation in mean turnout in state elections from year to year might be ascribed to the fact that some of the states have traditionally high turnout rates while in others electoral participation is always lower than average. Elections in low turnout states can squeeze the average turnout in that year substantially, if one takes into consideration that there take place only two to five state elections per year. Figure 2, which shows the development of turnout separately for all states, illustrates that there are substantial differences in the level of turnout in state elections between the states. A glance at the next two figures which show turnout in federal and European elections separately for the states makes clear that the order between the states concerning their turnout rates is almost always the same: While Bavaria and Baden-Wuerttemberg are at the lower end of the scale Rhineland-Palatinate, Saarland and Hesse are found at the top.

Figure 2: State Elections – Turnout 1979-1999 by States



Federal Elections – Turnout 1979-1999 by States

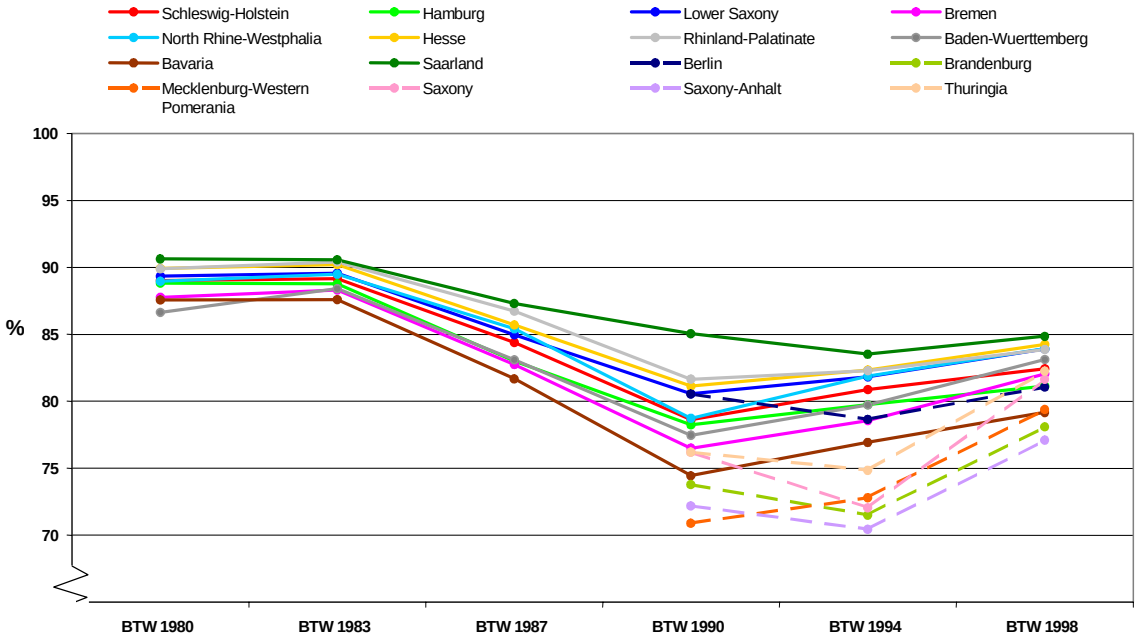
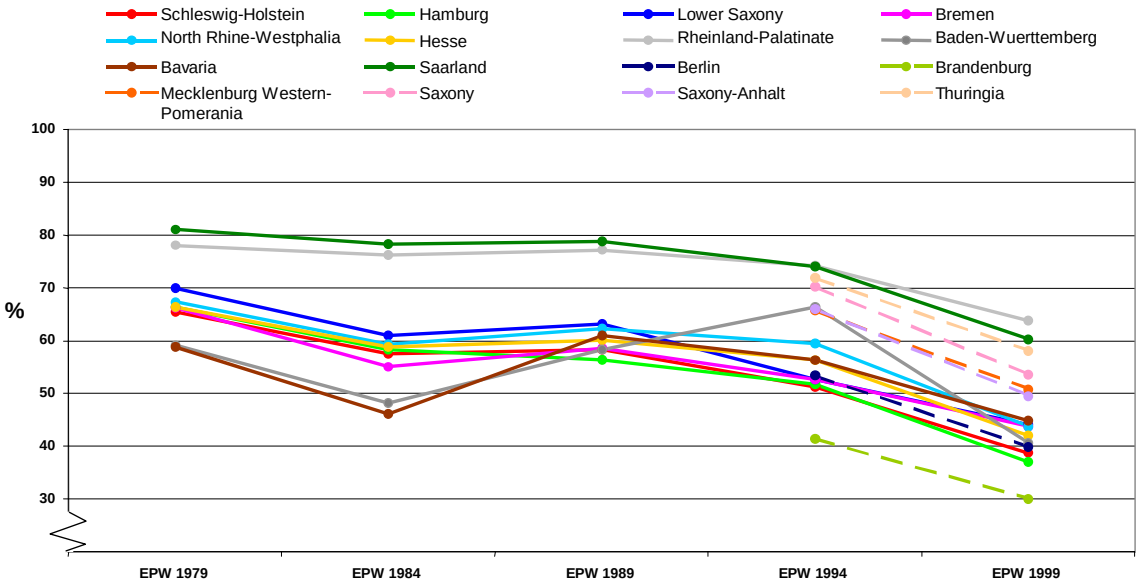


Figure 3: European Parliament Elections – Turnout 1979-1999 by States



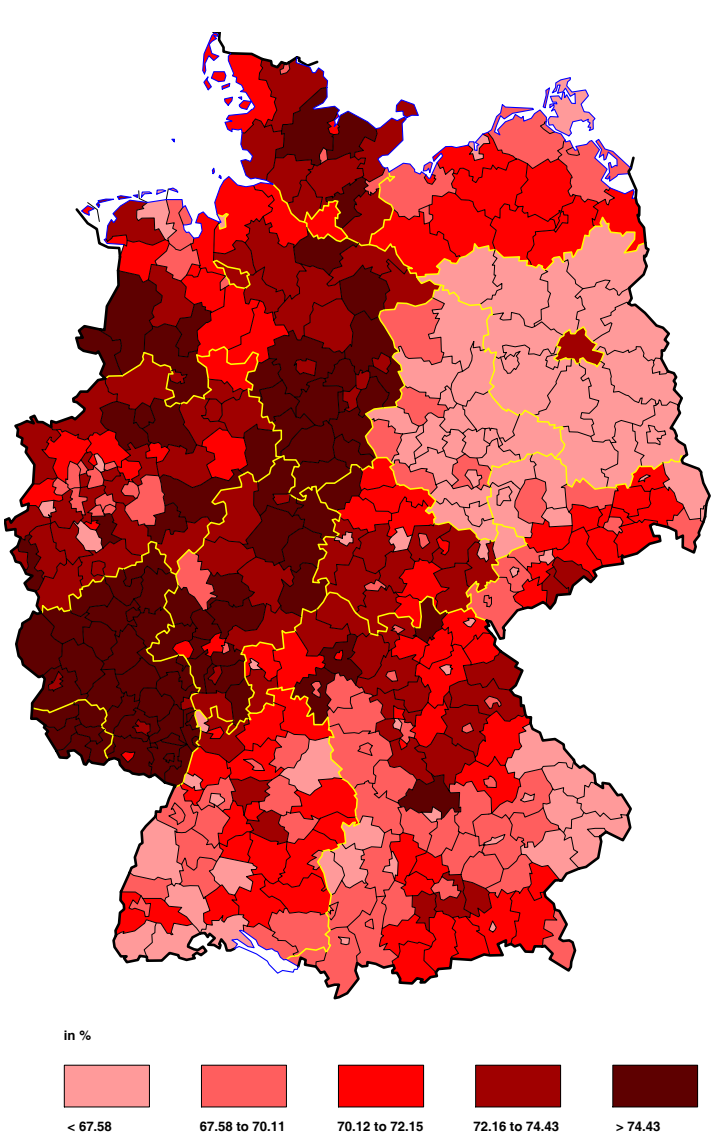
The fact, that there are regions with high and others with low average turnout is shown by the first map of mean turnout over all elections as well. However, one has to be careful with interpretation as the number of elections the average turnout rates are based on is not the same everywhere. In East-Germany the first free elections took place in 1990. That means that we can look back at only three federal elections, three Länder elections and only two European elections in each of the five new states, while in the old states of

West-Germany the average is based on 14 federal elections, 14 state elections and five European elections. That is not only problematic because the weight of a single election is heavier in East-Germany, but also because all the elections in East-Germany fall in a period when the times of very high turnout of about 90% were over in the West, as well. Therefore map 2 shows the mean turnout for all types of elections from 1990 to 1999 only.

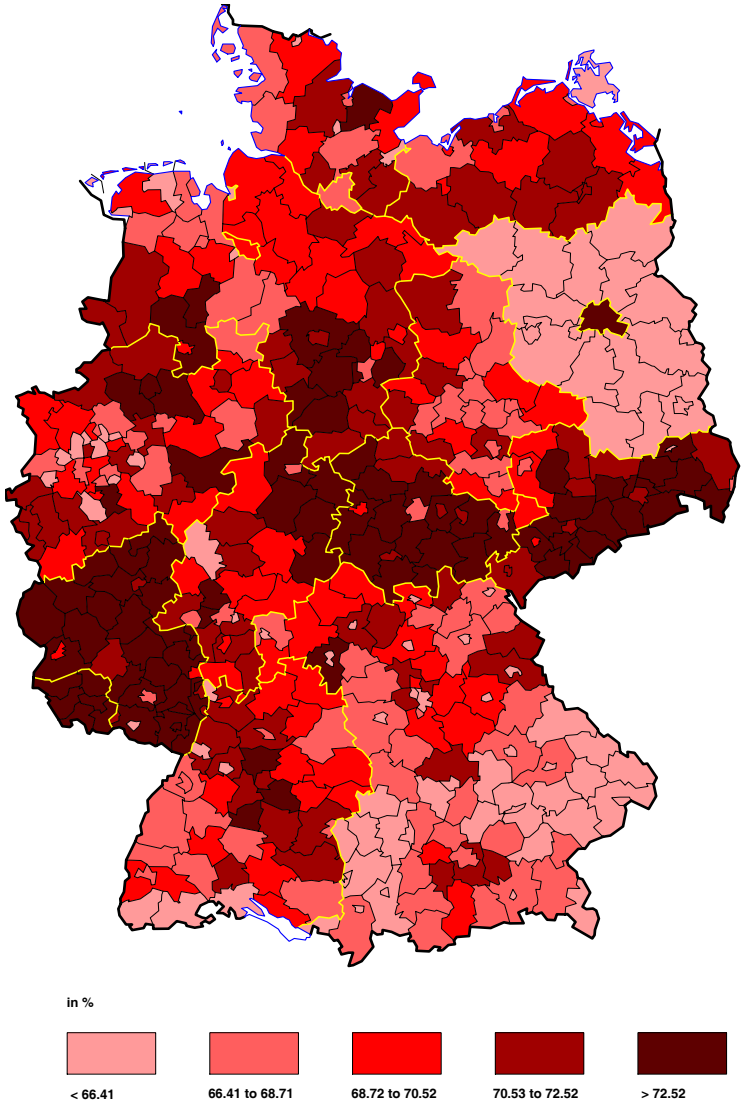
However, even with that in mind it becomes obvious that electoral participation is on average lower in the southern states Bavaria and Baden-Wuerttemberg, in the very industrial and urban area (“Ruhrgebiet”) in North Rhine-Westphalia as well as in large parts of East-Germany. Most noticeable is that all counties in Brandenburg belong to the lowest turnout pentile with an average participation of less than 67.58 percent. So it seems that in Brandenburg turnout is even lower than in the other Eastern states. However, an explanation for that is readily found: Brandenburg is the only state where European Parliament elections never took place with local elections simultaneously, which was the case in 1994 and 1999 in Mecklenburg, Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt and Thuringia. Concurrent local elections can explain differences in mean turnout for some of the West-German states as well: in the Saarland and Rhineland-Palatinate simultaneous local elections took place with all five European elections. In Baden-Wuerttemberg that was the case in 1994. Interesting about this finding is that local elections boost turnout in European elections.

What is also striking is that in bigger towns and cities turnout is mostly lower than in the surrounding areas. This fact becomes very clear in Bavaria, Thuringia as well as in Saxony, where the bigger towns and cities are represented by pale spots on the map. There seems to be a correlation between turnout and urbanity, which will be analysed in detail later.

Map 1: Mean turnout in European, federal and state elections, 1979 - 1999 (East-Germany 1990 – 1999)



Map 2: Mean turnout in European, federal and state elections, 1990 - 1999



2.3 Stability and change of turnout

From the figures 1 to 4 it becomes clear already that turnout varies between election types, but also between elections at the same level over time as well as in geographical terms. The purpose of the following section is to get some deeper insights in these different aspects of variation in turnout.

To test the hypothesis of declining turnout, regression analysis is employed in the following. By calculating linear regressions for each county with turnout as the dependent variable and time as the independent variable there is resulting a factor by which turnout changes each year according to the linear model and R square is a measure of the model fit. These regressions are calculated separately for each type of election. In the graphs 5 to 7 observed turnout as well as turnout predicted from the regressions is displayed, each separately for West and East-Germany. For state elections figure 5 shows that the line representing predicted turnout is falling over the time period and approximates, at least for West-Germany, observed turnout quite well. The mean R square for the West German counties is .65, indicating that on average 65 percent of the variance of turnout within a county can be explained by the factor time alone. In the East-German states the variation in turnout is higher than in the old German states reaching from 54.8 percent in Sachsen-Anhalt in 1994 to 79.4 percent in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania in 1998. However, the mean R square for all East-German counties is still .55.

Figure 6 contains observed and predicted turnout for federal elections in the period between 1980 and 1999. While for West-Germany again there is found a declining trend, which explains on average 56% of the variation in a county, for East-Germany it is not. In all East German states except for Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania the lowest turnout for federal elections was measured in 1994 before it increased considerably in the 1998 federal election. The regression coefficients are positive in 100 of the 112 counties. For European elections there is only interpreted the result for the West as only two European elections have taken place (figure 7). There is also measured a downward trend which must be ascribed primarily to the last European election in 1999 when only 44.5 percent of eligible voters in West-Germany turned out. Summarizing the description of turnout over the period of 1979 to 1999 there has to be stated that a considerable variance of participation can be explained by time.

In a second step factor analysis is applied to find dimensions of variation in turnout. As variables for this factor analysis the results (regression coefficients) of the above regressions in addition to ten other variables (mean turnout for each type of election, mean turnout over all elections, standard deviation for each type of election and difference between last and first election for each type) were used. Because of the different conditions in West and East the analyses were run separately for West and East-Germany. As a result four factors for West-Germany were found (table 1): The first factor indicates the level of turnout, with high factor scores meaning that over all elections turnout is above average. The other three factors indicate stability of turnout at the different levels. For East-Germany three factors resulted, the first of which again can be interpreted as a level factor (table 2).

However, different from the analysis for West-Germany variables indicating stability in federal and state elections load on a common factor here. The third factor represents stability in European elections.

The factor scores were then used to find clusters of counties with certain turnout patterns concerning level of turnout and stability at different types of elections. To be able to do that for Germany as a whole the two stability factors for West-Germany for federal and state elections were merged. The result of the cluster analysis with 6 clusters can be viewed in table 3 and map 3. The clusters in the map are ordered by the level of turnout: the darker the higher average turnout. With the six cluster solution 70.5 percent of the variance in the tree factors (level, stability federal and state elections, stability EP elections) can be explained by cluster membership. Again it can be observed from the map that neighbouring counties have a tendency to fall into the same cluster, this giving a hint that certain areas, sometimes the whole state like Baden-Württemberg, show the same turnout pattern over time. While in the case of a whole state falling into one cluster, this might be ascribed to state-specific circumstances, it is of great interest, why different areas of the same state belong to different clusters. In section 3.2 an explanation is sought in socio-economic conditions.

Figure 4: Turnout State Elections Since 1978: Observed and Predicted

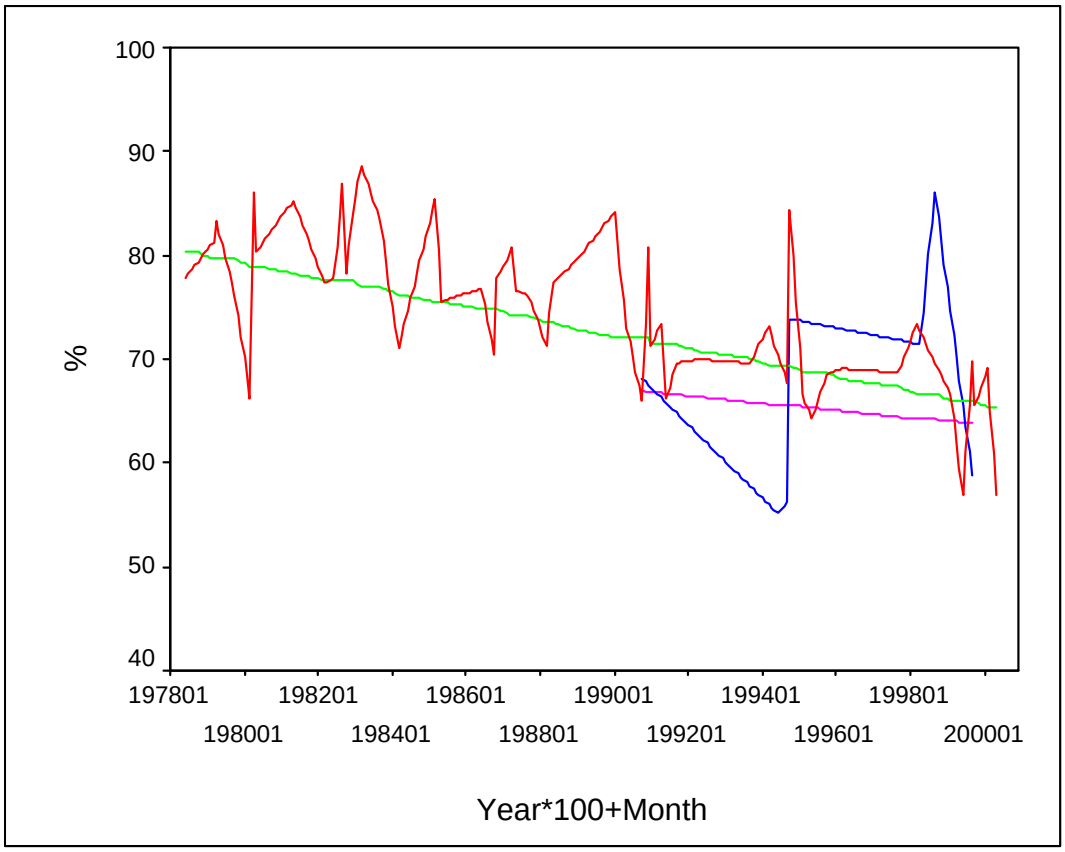


Figure 5: Turnout Federal Elections Since 1980: Observed and Predicted

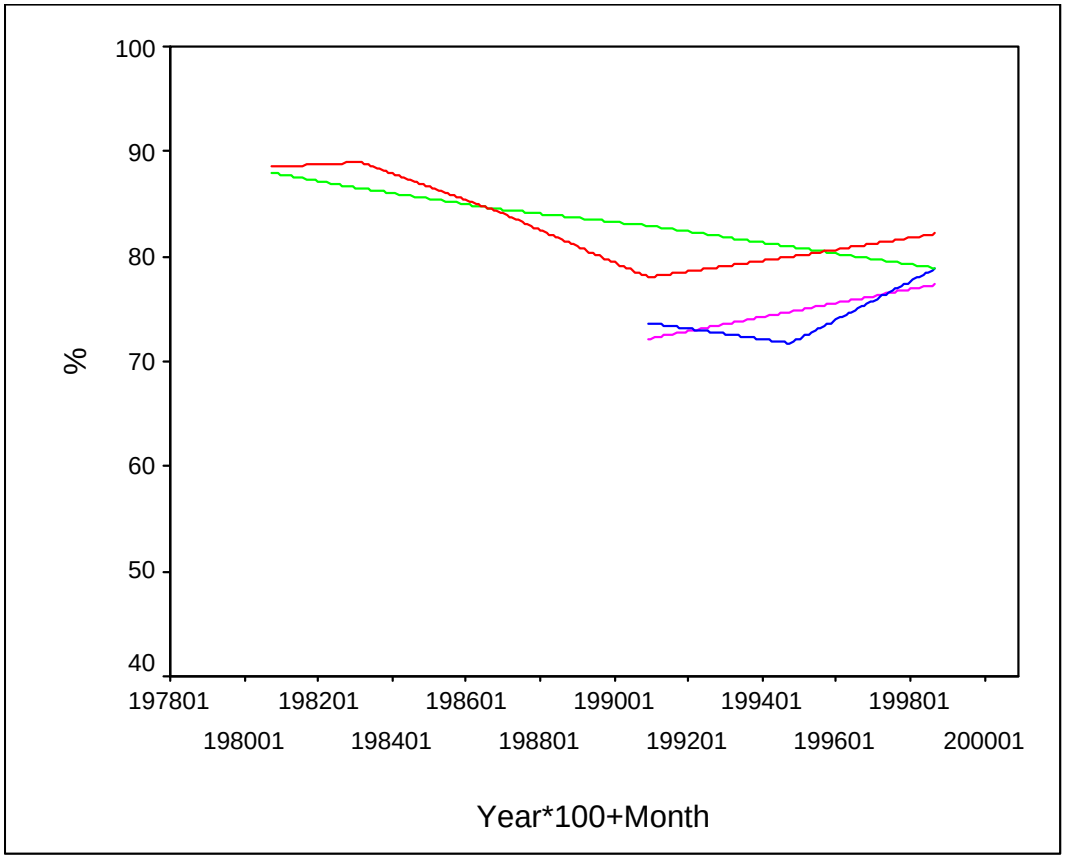


Figure 6: Turnout European Parliament Elections Since 1979: Observed and Predicted

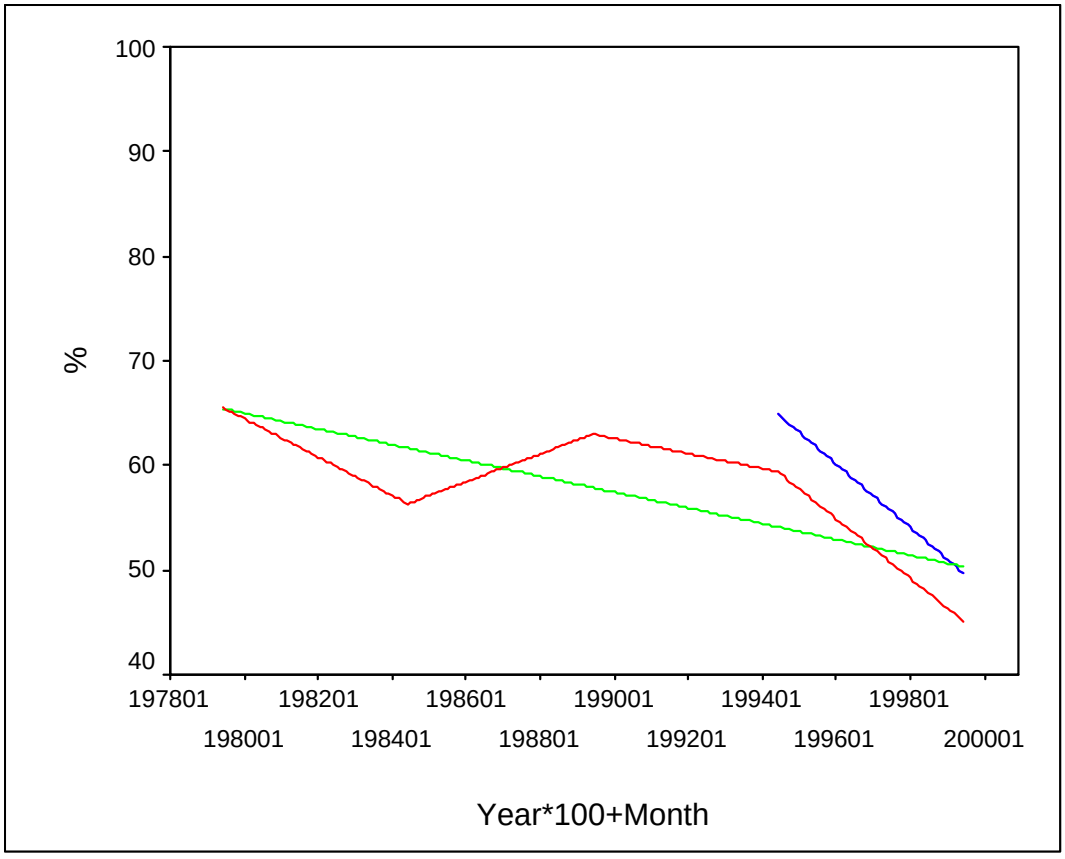


Table 1: Factor analysis of turnout variables, West-Germany

	Factor 1 Level	Factor 2 Stab. Fed.	Factor 3 Stab. State	Factor 4 Stab. EP
MEANTOT	.98117			
MEANLAND	.92205			
CONSTFED	.89130			
CONSTEP	.88330			
MEANFED	.87403	-.58499		
MEANEP	.86827			
CONSTLND	.81478		-.78748	
BYEARFED		-.99562		
DTOTFED		-.97075		
STDEVFED	-.60010	.92353		
BYEARLND			.99393	
STDEVLND			-.97093	
DTOTLAND			.97075	
DTOTEP				96435
STDEVPW				-.82898
BYEAREP				.81002

Explained Percent of Variance: 92.4
Max. Correlation between Factors: -0.34

Table 2: Factor analysis of turnout variables, East-Germany

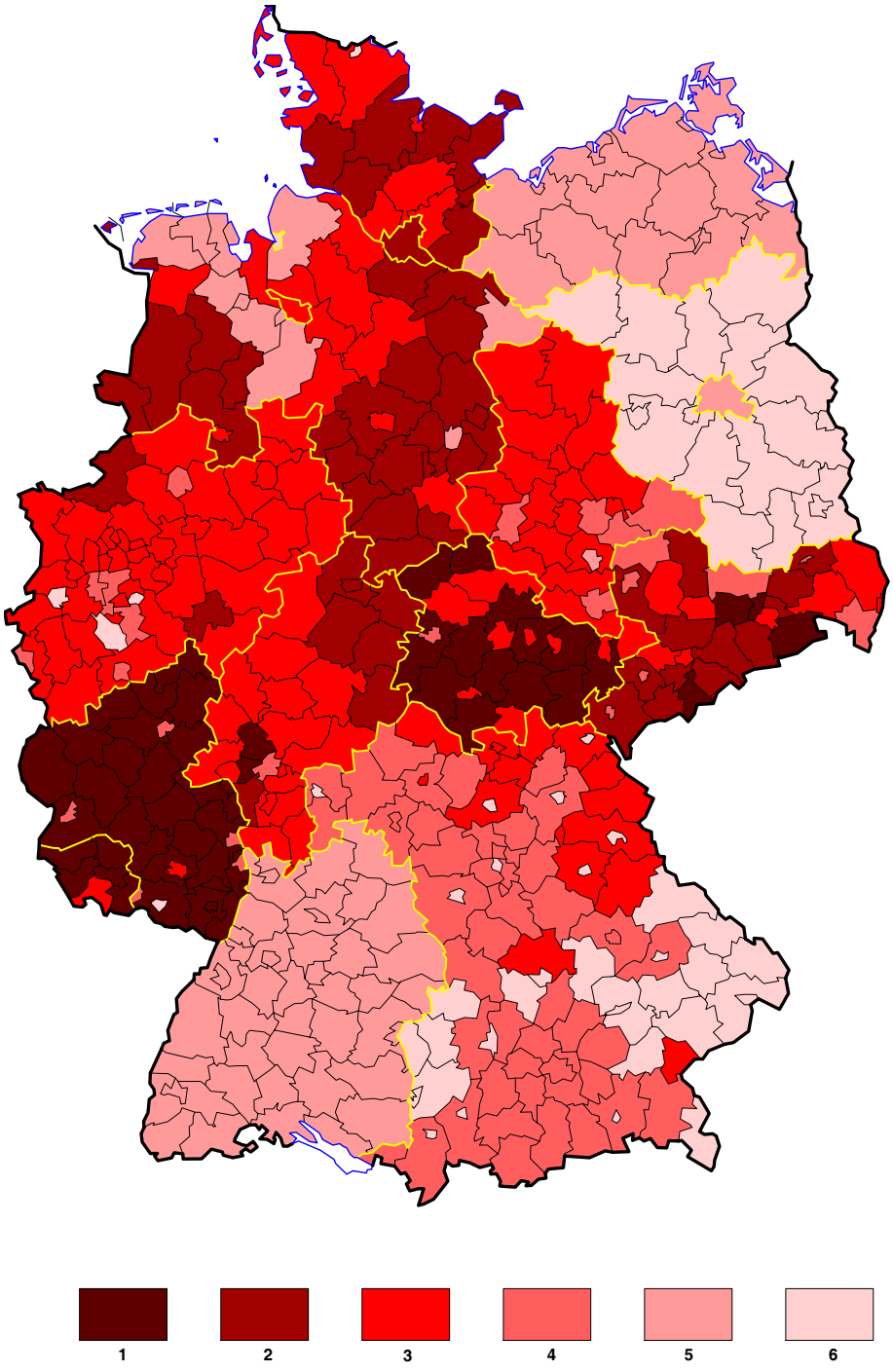
	Factor 1 Level	Factor 2 Stab. Fed. and State	Factor 3 Stab. EP
MEANFED	.94692		
MEANTOT	.90806		
CONSTLND	.87411		
MEANEP	.85717		
CONSTEP	.80647		-.62133
CONSTFED	.74528		
MEANLAND	.65310	.64645	
BYEARFED		.88651	
DTOTFED		.88651	
BYEARLND		.86161	
DTOTLAND		.86076	
STDEVFED		.78081	
STDEVLND		.69447	
DTOTEP			.99637
STDEVPW			.99637
BYEAREP			-.99575

Explained Percent of Variance: 85.6
Max. Correlation between Factors: 0.20

Table 3: Cluster Analysis of turnout factors: 6-cluster-solution

Cluster	Factor 1 Level of turnout	Factor 2 Stab. Fed. and State	Factor 3 Stability EP
1	1.6	-0.1	1.1
2	0.8	0.0	-1.6
3	0.1	-0.3	-0.5
4	-0.2	-0.1	0.9
5	-0.7	1.3	-0.1
6	-1.4	-0.9	0.5

Map 3: Clusters, resulting from the factor analysis of the dimensions of turnout



2.4 Voter transition rates: evidence from ECOL

Before the correlates of turnout are discussed, we will go into the details of abstention by analysing voter transition matrices for the latest elections at all levels. It is often argued that as a consequence of weakened party identification voting behaviour becomes more and more volatile. In the turnout context it is of special interest, if abstention is an option that is used by voters in certain elections, e.g. if no real choice is offered in their eyes, or if

abstention becomes a permanent behaviour, which means that there is a core of non-voters who never vote at a certain level or even never vote in any election.

With the help of ECOL that question cannot be answered in all depth, however, the ECOL results can give some information about the extent to which non-voting occurs in subsequent elections at the individual level.

Comparing the federal elections of 1994 and 1998 first, we find that 62.3 percent of the non-voters in 1994 did abstain again in 1998. 37.7 percent of the abstainers in 1994 voted in 1998. Almost one third of them supported the Social Democrats, another third voted for minor parties. The SPD gained most of their new support from former abstainers and from former voters of minor parties. The CDU lost more voters to the non-voting group than any other of the established parties[1]. These results are not very surprising if the situation before the 1998 federal election is known, however, they suggest that ECOL delivers reasonable results: after 16 years of Kohl's chancellorship a change in government was desired by a considerable part of the electorate, even among conservative voters. Interestingly, the percentage abstaining in two subsequent elections is much higher in West-Germany compared to the East, both in 1994 and 1998. That means that in East-Germany volatility is not only higher between the parties but also between non-voting and voting. A considerable share of abstainers in 1990 and 1994 voted for the PDS and the SPD in the following election. However, the main interest is not that special election but the question if abstention is more stable in European than in federal elections. A striking result from the ECOL calculations is that in federal elections the parties in general do much better in holding their voters than in European elections. In the 1998 federal election the main five parties of the German party system (CDU, SPD, FDP, Greens and PDS) managed to keep between 95.6 percent (SPD) and 79.8 percent (FDP) of their voters from 1994. In the 1999 European election those rates were considerably lower with the exception of the PDS as table 4 shows. The same pattern is found for the comparisons of the earlier elections. This finding supports the hypothesis that in second-order elections where less is at stake voting behaviour is much more volatile than in first-order elections.

A second hypothesis of the second-order model is that small parties do better. This is confirmed by the ECOL results for the 1998 federal election compared with the 1999 European election: The electorate of the FDP in the 1999 European election was composed of 16.5 percent CDU- and 30.3 percent SPD-voters from the federal election 1998. The same pattern can be observed for the Greens, 15.1 percent of whose electorate were SPD-voters in the 1998 federal election. Tactical voting, which leads to a strengthening of the big parties in first-order elections, is not necessary in second-order elections, where nothing or at least not much is at stake in the voters eyes.

[1] Detailed results are not shown here due to lack of space.

Table 4: Voter stability between elections

	Federal elections		European elections		Federal election 1998/ European election 1999
	1994/1998	1990/1994	1994/1999	1989/1994	
CDU	83.5	78.7	69.8	74.1	51.6
SPD	95.7	89.2	56.6	71.1	30.0
FDP	79.5	18.7	17.6	29.5	7.2
Greens	80.2	28.9	31.0	50.3	31.8
PDS	87.6	96.7	79.9	-[1]	56.4
REP	30.7	31.8	-[2]	22.3	9.2
Others	6.5	7.9	22.5	17.7	13.3
Abstainers	62.3	57.8	85.1	70.4	79.4

3. Facilitation and mobilisation of voters

3.1 Institutional facilitation and mobilisation

Before we get to the analysis of the correlates of turnout, the institutional arrangements in Germany for the three types of elections shall be outlined. On the one hand that might be necessary to decide if differential turnout at different levels of governance within Germany is influenced by those institutional and electoral arrangements. On the other hand some knowledge might be helpful for the international comparison following in a later chapter. The concept underlying this book suggests to distinguish between institutional facilitation and institutional mobilisation.To begin with institutional facilitation we have a look at

- the day of voting
- the month of voting
- hours of opening of polls and
- postal voting possibilities.

However, in Germany most of these organisational characteristics of elections do neither differ between the levels of elections nor did they change over the time period from 1979 to 1999. All elections take place on a Sunday, opening hours of the polls are from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.. Postal voting exists since the third national election in 1957 and is also possible in state and European elections. It is officially only allowed for persons who are not in their precinct because of important reasons at the day of the election, or for people who are not able to go to the polls because of physical disabilities. In fact, however, everybody can vote by post as the reasons are not investigated.

The last feature, month of voting, can change from election to election – at least at national and sub-national level. National elections are usually held in September or October, with three exceptions during the period from 1979 onwards. European Parliament Elections are the only ones that have always taken place in the same month, namely in June,

a time when many people might be on holidays. In 1999, for example, the voting day, June 13, fell in vacations in seven of the sixteen states. Even if postal voting were possible in the case of absence because of holidays, some people might not use this offer. Though the survey data for the 1999 European election do ask for the reasons of abstention, it is unfortunately impossible to investigate the effect of a voting day falling within school holidays as there are not enough cases if one breaks down the non-voters by state. So we can conclude: With the exception of the month of voting in case of European elections there is hardly any evidence that institutional facilitation factors can explain differences in turnout, neither over time nor over different levels.

If we come to institutional mobilisation, we have to look at

- powers of levels of governance and
- variations in electoral systems.

The substantial difference between elections at the European level on the one hand and federal and state level on the other is, that European elections do not offer any prospect of a change of government, while on both of the other two levels voters judge the old government and decide on the new one at least indirectly. The Bundestag, which is elected directly in federal elections, elects the German chancellor. That means that the outcome of German national elections has substantial impact on the next government. Of course, the proportional representation electoral system in connection with a party system with five parties (CDU, SPD, Greens, FDP and PDS) leaves some room for coalition formation, so that the government does not have to be determined by a certain election outcome. Usually, however, the chancellor comes from the strongest party. The political systems of the states are very similar to the national political system, with the prime ministers elected by the parliaments of the Länder (Landtage), whereas in the European Union there is no government responsible to the European Parliament and European Parliament Elections are therefore not determining in any way the executive of the Union. This fact has also important effects on the campaigns for European Parliament Elections as there is hardly any personalisation between top-candidates. (Comparative research on election campaigns on European and national level is rare, but this observation is not contested, as far as I know.) This fact is undoubtedly one reason why European Elections are of minor interest to the media and are therefore not covered in the same way as national or even sub-national elections.

Besides the fact that the European Parliament does not elect a responsible government, it has less power as a legislative organ than the Bundestag, the German federal assembly. The Bundestag has the right to initiate legislation, and all bills have to be adopted by the Bundestag. The powers of the European Parliament are more restricted in that respect. First of all the EP does not have the right to initiate legislation. Second, not all European law has to be adopted by a majority in the EP. There exist four different procedures for the EP to influence European legislation, only two of which give the EP a veto power (*co-decision procedure* and *assent procedure*). Under the *consultation procedure* and the *co-operation procedure* the EP can only delay proposals by the Commission and decision making by the Council.

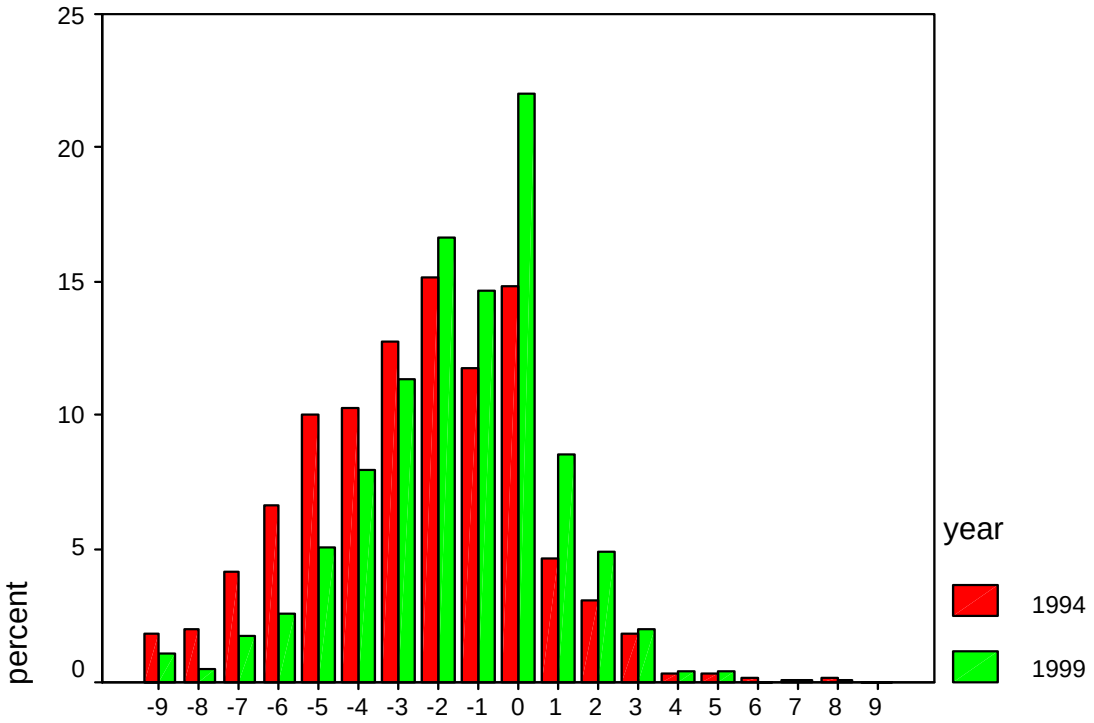
To assess the powers of the sub-national parliaments, the Landtage, is not easy in a highly complex federal system. First of all it has to be mentioned that the states participate in federal legislation via the Bundesrat, the second chamber, where the state governments are represented. Basically there are three areas of legislation: one is exclusive federal legislation, where the states have no say, the second is exclusive state legislation, where the federal government is not involved, and the third are the so-called “Gemeinschaftsaufgaben”, where both levels have to give their assent. In the areas of legislation, that are residing at the state level, the Länder parliaments have full legislative powers. That areas shrunk since the beginning of the Federal Republic, while the number of bills requiring approval of both the Bundestag and the Bundesrat rose. The states, however, still have substantial influence on large parts of the legislation, not only at state level but also at the federal level.

The powers of the parliaments at different levels of governance, however, can only be of any importance for turnout if those differences are realised by the eligible population. Figure 8 shows the differentials between the power of the EP and the Bundestag in 1994 and 1999, negative numbers meaning that the national parliament is considered to have more power than the EP, positive numbers meaning that the EP has more power than the Bundestag. Respondents were asked to assess the power of both parliaments on a ten point scale. Obviously most people perceive the relative weakness of the EP. However, the comparison between 1994 and 1999 shows a decreasing perceived differential. In 1999 a share of more than 20 percent of the respondents rated both parliaments equal, indicated by a value of zero on the scale. The relationship between the perception of power of the EP and turnout will be analysed later.

The second criterion of institutional mobilisation of voters mentioned above is the electoral system. In Germany the electoral system in all elections is basically proportional representation. Although it is supplemented in national elections and in some state elections by a second vote for a candidate in the constituency, it is still primarily a proportional representation system. That means that voters do not have to adapt to a “new” electoral system in European elections.

It has to be concluded that institutional facilitation as well as institutional mobilisation cannot explain the differential turnout between federal and European elections in Germany as the organisational contexts are very similar at all levels of governance.

Figure 7: Difference between power of European Parliament and power of the national parliament



Differential: power of EP-power of nat. parl.

3.2 Socio-economic structure as facilitation factor: evidence from the ecological data

Individual facilitation means all factors at the personal level that make it easier to vote, like e.g. education. High education may reduce the efforts needed to search for or to select relevant political information and to process information, therefore reducing the costs of voting. Aggregate as well as survey data analysis will be applied to find demographic and sociological correlates of turnout that can be interpreted as facilitating.

It should be pointed out that by analysis of aggregate data nothing can and should be said about correlations at the individual level. Rather it shall be investigated if the geographical differences in turnout we saw from the maps and graphs can be explained at least partly by different economic and sociological conditions in the Kreise. As mentioned above a vast pool of aggregate data was collected as well, which gives us the opportunity to analyse first, if correlations found at the aggregate level are the same as at the individual level. Second, it is possible to look for effects of additional variables, which partly can only be measured at the aggregate level. Before the results of the multivariate analysis of the aggregate data are shown, some information is given on this type of data.

In Germany ecological data were primarily collected at the level of the 440 Kreise. For two states, however, aggregate data are additionally collected at the lower level of the communes (Gemeinden). Those two states are Bavaria and North Rhine Westphalia. This

provides the opportunity to look for different effects of the same variables in those two states. This is of interest because Germany is quite a heterogeneous country with respect to traditions, economic structure and sociological structure due to its history and its federal structure which has its roots in this history. Bavaria and North Rhine Westphalia are interesting examples as they differ in the aspects mentioned above: Bavaria is one of the southern German states, rather rural, with a majority of catholic inhabitants and had a conservative government since 1945 interrupted by only two short periods when a social democrat was prime minister of the state. North Rhine Westphalia is the German state with the largest population (18 million), situated in the West of Germany, stamped by the industrial area Ruhrgebiet, where 8 million people live in an urban surrounding. It has had a social democratic prime minister since 1966. About 57 percent of the population are catholic. There are 2052 communes in Bavaria and 396 in North Rhine Westphalia.

As indicators for economic well-being or disadvantage the following variables are available from official statistics: Education, occupation and professional status, average income, unemployment rate, share of foreigners and migration. To capture the dimension of urbanity population density is used, as well. Although the dependent variables cover the time period from 1979 to 1999 there are only taken structural variables from one time point. This is due to the lack of continuous availability of those variables over the period. The dependent variables are mean turnout in European, federal and state elections.

Bivariate correlations of these indicators with turnout are rather low at the aggregate level. The only variables showing consistent directions are the share of foreigners, migration and the share of single person households (only available from the census 1987). This result is not surprising as there are many other influences on turnout, like e.g. simultaneous elections at another level, that have to be taken into consideration. The bivariate results are therefore not displayed. To capture those diverse influences stepwise multiple regression analysis is employed in the following. To accommodate the different historical development in East-Germany the two parts of the country, East and West, are analysed separately.

For European Parliament elections the explained variance, indicated by the R square, is quite impressing with 72 percent in West- and 94 percent in East-Germany (table 5). However, a closer look shows that this high R square is mainly produced by the inclusion of the dummy variables for concurrent local elections. Only three additional indicators are significant, however, different ones in the two parts of Germany. While in West-Germany the share of school leavers without a degree, the share of employees in production and the share of population between the age of 25 and 30 years add significantly to the explanation of turnout, they do not so in the East. There it is the share of employees in trade and communications, the share of employees in services and the share of population dependent on social welfare, that are significantly correlated to turnout in the multivariate analysis.

Table 5: Stepwise OLS regression for mean turnout in European Parliament Elections

Independent variables	West Germany	East Germany
	Beta	**Beta**
dummy: 4 concurrent local elections	.814***	
dummy: 1 concurrent local election		
dummy: 2 concurrent local elections		.892***
share of school leavers without degree 1998	-.173***	
share of school leavers with A-level 1998		
share of employees in agriculture and forestry 1997		
share of employees in production 1997	-.079**	
share of employees in trade and communications 1997		-.086**
share of employees in services 1997		-.092**
share of employees in public admin., private households, organizations without pecuniary reward 1997		
migration in % of the mean population 1998		
share of foreigners in the population 1998		
share of population dependent on social welfare 1997		-.262***
unemployment rate December 1996		
Population density 1998		
share of population 18-25 years 1998		
share of population 25-30 years 1998	-.161***	
share of population 65 years and older 1998		
Corrected R^2	**0.721**	**0.935**

To assess the potential of the sociological and economic variables a stepwise OLS regression was calculated only for the counties without concurrent local elections in West Germany. For East-Germany there is only one state where no local elections took place at the day of European elections 1994 and 1999, which is Brandenburg. Because that were only 29 counties East-Germany was not analyzed. As shown in table 6 the variables high share of employees in agriculture and forestry and large share of school leavers without a degree have a negative coefficient, meaning that in areas with those features turnout tends to be low. High population density and a high share of population between an age of 25 and 35 years are as well characteristics for low turnout areas, whereas the variables migration and social welfare dependency got a positive sign, contrary to the hypothesis that in poorer and disadvantaged areas turnout is lower. If like in the second part of table 6 dummy variables for the states are included in the regression these last two variables are excluded and instead the unemployment rate is introduced with a negative coefficient. These changes are probably mainly due to the significance of the dummy for Bavaria, a state with traditionally high abstention, but relatively low unemployment and low population density. That might explain why the unemployment variable is significant when a dummy for Bavaria is included and why population density has a higher coefficient. What that reveals is that the heterogeneity between the states causes problems to find correlations between socio-economic indicators at the aggregate level and turnout as those are often disturbed by different turnout levels between states.

Table 6: Stepwise OLS regression for mean turnout in European Parliament Elections, only Kreise without concurrent local elections in West Germany

Independent variables	West	West, with Länder -dummies
	Beta	**Beta**
share of school leavers without degree 1998	-.373***	-.145**
share of school leavers with A-level 1998		
share of employees in agriculture and forestry 1997	-.387***	-.316***
share of employees in production 1997		
share of employees in trade and communications 1997		-.130*
share of employees in services 1997		
share of employees in public admin., private households, organizations without pecuniary reward 1997		
migration in % of the mean population 1998	.181*	
share of foreigners in the population 1998		
share of population dependent on social welfare 1997	.165*	
unemployment rate December 1996		-.313***
Population density 1998	-.294***	-.302***
share of population 18-25 years 1998		
share of population 25-30 years 1998	-.156*	
share of population 65 years and older 1998		
Schleswig-Holstein		-.217***
Hamburg		
Lower Saxony		
Bremen		
North Rhine Westphalia		
Hesse		-.203***
Bavarian		-.723***
Berlin		
Corrected R^2	**0.310**	**0.484**

To be able to compare the relevance of ecological characteristics for turnout in European elections with that for federal elections regressions were calculated again, this time turnout in federal elections being the dependent variable. Most obvious, concurrent elections do not play a role as prominent as with European elections. This is not surprising as it cannot be expected that simultaneous second order elections boost turnout in first order elections. The findings in table 7 are quite puzzling, if one looks at the column for Germany as a whole first. It is surprising that the variable high share of school leavers has a negative sign, while the variables share of population dependent on social welfare and high share of population between the age of 25 and 30 have a positive one. Most of these unexpected results are due to the big differences between East and West Germany as the separate regressions in the second and third column show. In federal elections, turnout in East Germany has always been lower compared to the West, which means that most of

the variance that is tried to explain in the first regression for the whole of Germany is the one between East and West.

The regression for West Germany shows the importance of the agriculture variable, which has a negative impact on turnout. Kreise with turnout below average in the West are further characterized by a high share of population over 65 years, high population density and high share of foreigners and by a high share of population with an age of 25 to 30 years. Kreise with a strong service sector as well as with concurrent local or state elections show higher turnout. The regression for East Germany surprisingly shows that concurrent local elections are negatively correlated to turnout. Also different from the patterns we saw before high share of young people between 18 and 25 as well as a high share of old people are positively correlated to turnout in federal elections in East Germany. Not surprising is the negative coefficient for the share of social welfare dependents, a high unemployment rate and high population density.

The stepwise regression that was calculated for mean turnout in state elections (table 9) shows a rather similar result as for federal elections. The significant coefficients have the same directions for both types of elections. Again, the regression for West- and East-Germany together results in coefficients which partly explain the variance between the two parts of the country. This is true for the indicator 'school leavers with A-level'[2] as well as for the unemployment rate. From columns two and three follows that some variables are only relevant for West-Germany, while others are so only for the East. Consistently correlated to turnout in state elections is again population density, the share of foreigners and, not surprising, the concurrence of a federal election.

If it comes to the analysis of the two states, Bavaria (table 9) and North Rhine Westphalia (table 10) the first thing that attracts attention is that in North Rhine Westphalia it is possible to explain much more of the variance than for Bavaria. In North Rhine Westphalia the share of catholic population seems to be a very important variable, highly significant for all three types of elections, European, federal and state elections. Two other variables with significant impact for all election types are the share of foreigners and the share of unemployed people, both negatively correlated to turnout at the level of the communes. For federal elections there are the age variables included, as well. Contrary to what we saw in the individual data analysis a high share of 18 to 25 year old population is positively correlated to turnout at the municipal level. A high share of blue collar workers among the working population has a slightly negative effect on turnout.

For Bavaria the most important variable is the share of single person households, which is an indicator for urban areas, where turnout is usually lower than in rural areas. While the educational structure has no effect on turnout in North Rhine Westphalia, it is correlated to turnout in Bavaria in the expected direction: low education gets a negative sign while higher secondary education variables show positive signs. Contrary to North Rhine Westphalia a high share of blue collar works has a positive sign for all three types of elections, and the variable share of catholic population gets a negative one and is not as important in Bavaria as it is in North Rhine Westphalia.

[2] The percentage of school leavers with A-level is higher in East-Germany with Brandenburg ranking first.

In both states the variance that can be explained is highest for local elections. It seems as if turnout at the commune level is even more than in other election types influenced by the urbanity factor. For Bavaria that is indicated by the share of blue collar workers and the share of foreigners, both having a negative sign and being highly significant. Those groups of the population are more likely to be found in cities and big towns. For North-Rhine Westphalia rurality is indicated by the share of people employed in forestry and agriculture. The reason for that finding might be that in rural, mostly small communes a local election is more personalized, that providing an additional incentive to turn out.

What the comparison shows is that with the aggregate data analysis it is very important to consider the different circumstances and particularities. Being catholic can have totally different implications in a state where Catholicism is not the dominant denomination than in a state where it is dominating.

Table 7: Stepwise OLS regression for mean turnout in federal elections

	Germany	West Germany	East Germany
Independent variables	**Beta**	**Beta**	**Beta**
concurrent local election		.242***	-.483***
concurrent state election	.129***	.218***	
share of school leavers without degree 1998	-.147***		
share of school leavers with A-level 1998	-.137***		
share of employees in agriculture and forestry 1997	-.163***	-.432***	
share of employees in production 1997			
share of employees in trade and communications 1997			-.121*
share of employees in services 1997		.222***	
share of employees in public admin., private households, organizations without pecuniary reward 1997			
migration in % of the mean population 1998			
share of foreigners in the population 1998		-.271***	
share of population dependent on social welfare 1997	.221***		-.238**
unemployment rate December 1996	-.404***		-.366***
Population density 1998	-.232***	-.291***	-.198*
share of population 18-25 years 1998	-.360***		.302***
share of population 25-30 years 1998	.191***	-.238***	
share of population 65 years and older 1998		-.319***	.421***
Corrected R^2	**0.621**	**0.368**	**0.669**

Table 8: Stepwise OLS regression for mean turnout in state elections

	Germany	West Germany	East Germany
Independent variables	**Beta**	**Beta**	**Beta**
concurrent federal election	.423***	.329***	.898***
share of school leavers without degree 1998		.104*	
share of school leavers with A-level 1998	-.170***		
share of employees in agriculture and forestry 1997	-.116*	-.239***	
share of employees in production 1997			
share of employees in trade and communications 1997			
share of employees in services 1997		.167**	
share of employees in public admin., private households, organizations without pecuniary reward 1997			
migration in % of the mean population 1998			
share of foreigners in the population 1998	-.194**	-.377***	-.374***
share of population dependent on social welfare 1997	.283***	.123*	
unemployment rate December 1996	-.368***		-.212**
Population density 1998	-.252***	-.301***	-.260**
share of population 18-25 years 1998	-.287***	-.154***	.161*
share of population 25-30 years 1998	.237***		.469***
share of population 65 years and older 1998		-.154**	.448***
Corrected R^2	**.518**	**.389**	**.713**

Table 9: Stepwise OLS regression for mean turnout in European Parliament Elections, federal elections, state elections and local elections in Bavaria

	European	federal	state	local
Independent variables	**Beta**	**Beta**	**Beta**	**Beta**
share of population with secondary school (Hauptschule) 1987	-.228***			-.097**
share of population with grammar school (Realschule) 1987		.225***	.210***	
share of population with comprehensive secondary school (Gymnasium) 1987		.125**	.164***	
share of working population: self employed 1987	-.124***	-.231***	-.138***	-.071*
share of working population: helping family members 1987				-.108***
share of working population: blue collar workers 1987	.240***	.181***	.112*	-.355***
share of working population: unemployed 1987	-.126***	-.199***	-.137***	-.090***
share of population 18-25 years 1987	.111***			
share of population 25-30 years 1987	-.058*		-.063**	
share of population 65 years and older 1987	.240***	.138***	.162***	
share of catholic population 1987		-.062**	-.049*	-.070***
share of single person households 1987	-.326***	-.393***	-.359***	-.327***
share of foreigners 1987		-.085**	-.129***	-.224***
Corrected R^2	**0.156**	**0.256**	**0.173**	**0.387**

Table 10: Stepwise OLS regression for mean turnout in European Parliament Elections, federal elections, state elections and local elections in North Rhine Westphalia

	eurpean	federal	state	LOCAL
Independent variables	**Beta**	**Beta**	**Beta**	**Beta**
share of employees with A-level graduation within social insurance 1990				
share of employees with university degree within social insurance 1990				
share of population working in forest and agriculture 1987				.142**
share of working population: blue collar workers 1987		-.082*		
share of unemployed 1987	-.215***	-.264***	-.258***	-.305***
share of population 18-25 years 1987		.141**		.111*
share of population 25-30 years 1987		-.138**	-.129**	-.132**
share of population 65 years and older 1987		-.121*		
share of catholic population 1987	.353***	.219***	.252***	.209***
share of apartments with one room 1990				
share of foreigners 1987	-.329***	-.338***	-.303***	-.318***
Corrected R^2	**0.408**	**0.494**	**0.334**	**0.533**

By regression analysis the influence of single variables is estimated by holding the other variables constant. This enables us to deal with the problem of many partly contradictory influences on the dependent variable, in this case turnout. Another approach to the problem is the factor analysis which is employed in the following. By factor analysis a number of different variables are analyzed to find underlying patterns, thereby condensing the information in a smaller set of components. That seems to be promising in the context of ecological analysis of turnout, as it is not the value of a certain variable like the percentage of foreigners, that might stand in a close connection to turnout, but it is the socio-economic overall-picture that is supposed to condition the inclination of residents to participate in elections. The principal component analysis for the independent variables mentioned above is conducted separately for West- and East-Germany, because existing differences in the levels of the exogenous variables, especially economic variables, that would distort an overall analysis too much by focusing on the West-East-differences. The results of the two factor analyses are contained in tables 11 and 12. For West-Germany we find three factors: one that can be interpreted as an urbanity factor, the second representing the dimension of social weakness and the third factor contains the economic dimension low production and a relatively strong third sector. For East-Germany five factors are found: again an urbanity factor comes out very clear, the other four factors are economic ones. To correlate the turnout structure to the dimensions found by factor analysis the mean factor loadings for each turnout cluster, which were shown in map 3 were computed (tables 13 and 14).

Table 11: Factor analysis of independent variables at county level, West-Germany

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3
Share of foreigners of the overall population 1998	0.904		
Population density in 1000 inhabitants per sqkm 1998	0.799		
Share of employees in agriculture, forestry and fisheries1997	-0.770		
Share of migrants and immigrants of the average population 1998	-0.618	-0.549	
Share of school leavers with general university entrance qualification 1998	0.577		0.526
Average change of unemployment rate 1979 to 1997 in		0.927	
Average unemployment rate 1996		0.911	
Recipients of continuous subsistence payments outside institutions per 1000 inhabitants		0.715	
Share of employees in production industries 1997			-0.967
Share of employees in services 1997			0.678
Share of federal employees and employees in private households and non-commercial organizations 1997			0.623
Share of employees in distributive trade, transport and communications 1997			0.556
% of total variance	43.26	15.71	13.80
Eigenvalue	**4.27**	**2.08**	**1.17**

Interpretations of Factors: Factor 1: urbanity; Factor 2: socially weak; Factor 3: strong third sector / low production

Table 12: Factor analysis of independent variables at county level, East-Germany

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5
Population density in 1000 inhabitants per sqkm 1998	0.841				
Recipients of continuous subsistence payments outside institutions per 1000 inhabitants	0.839				
Share of foreigners of the overall population 1998	0.831				
Share of employees in services 1997	0.605				
Share of federal employees and employees in private households and non-commercial organizations 1997		0.895			
Share of employees in production industries 1997		-0.872			
Unemployment rate 12/1996			0.871		
Share of school leavers with general university entrance qualification 1998			-0.665		
Share of employees in agriculture, forestry and fisheries 1997	-0.513		0.534		
Average change of unemployment rate 1979 to 1997 in percentage points				0.909	
Share of migrants and immigrants of the average population 1998				-0.525	
Share of employees in distributive trade, transport and communications 1997					0.957
% of total variance	39.09	14.09	10.69	9.53	7.90
Eigenvalue	**4.690**	**1.691**	**1.283**	**1.143**	**0.948**

Interpretations of Factors: Factor 1: urbanity; Factor 2: low production/high share of working population by the state; Factor 3: High unemployment, low education; Factor 4: High change in unemployment/migration; Factor 5: High percentage of employees in trade, communications and information

Table 13: Mean factor scores in turnout clusters, West-Germany

Turnout Cluster	urbanity	socially weak	strong 3. sector
1 (high turnout)	-.30	-.17	.26
2	-.52	.76	.17
3	.12	.23	.11
4	.03	-.76	-.04
5	.20	-.17	-.19
6 (low turnout)	.22	.19	-.36

High turnout clusters are not urban, are not socially weak and have a relatively strong third sector. On the other end, clusters with low turnout are more urban, socially weak and do not have a strong third sector. What seems contradictory is that the counties in cluster 4 are obviously not socially weak. This is to be explained by the fact that large parts of Bavaria fall into that cluster. Most of the Bavarian counties are quite well off economically but have nevertheless relatively low turnout. Cluster 5 includes the whole of Baden-Württemberg, which is also one of the wealthy states.

Table 14: Mean factor scores in turnout clusters, East-Germany

Cluster	urbanity	low production, high share of working population employed by the state	high unemployment, low education, relatively high share of agriculture	high change in unemployment, migration	high percentage of employees in trade, communications and information
1 (high turnout)	-.27	-.85	-.15	-.09	-.05
2	-.38	-.80	-.12	-.54	-.81
3	.04	.08	.05	.20	.32
4	.21	-.23	-.11	.85	.18
5	.51	.77	.66	-.42	-.25
6 (low turnout)	-.33	.40	-.55	-.08	.08

For East-Germany the relationship between turnout and the components of social structure are not linear, as well. Again returning to map 3 to look, which states are in the clusters, helps in explaining unexpected results from table 14. Cluster 1 (high turnout) is basically Thuringia which is not very urban, has high production and below average unemployment. On the other side of the spectrum we find in cluster 5 Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania and Berlin. The fact that Berlin is in this Cluster explains the high value on the factor urbanity. At the same time the value of the third factor (high unemployment, low education and relatively high share of agriculture) is explained by Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania being in cluster 5. In cluster 6 in East-Germany we find Brandenburg – rural, high share of people employed by the state and relatively low unemployment. Of course,

we have to consider that Brandenburg has such a low turnout over all elections because there never took place concurrent local elections with EP elections.

While hardly any correlations were found by bivariate analysis of the aggregate data, multivariate regression as well as factor and cluster analysis showed that turnout is correlated to urbanity, with lower turnout in urban areas. It further became clear that it is rather difficult to find strong correlations between turnout and aggregate socio-economic measures as there are many other, sometimes situational, circumstances influencing turnout, that cannot be captured by ecological data analysis. Obviously there must be other non-economic conditions like historical experiences or the political power situation that have to be taken into consideration when a comprehensive explanation for the level turnout is looked for. As the results of the aggregate data analysis show turnout is only in part a phenomenon of space. This result might be due to the limited range of variables available at the county level. However, it seems unlikely that further indicators at the aggregate level would add much more explanatory power.

3.3 Facilitation at the individual level: evidence from the survey data

A conclusion from the above analysis is that a considerable part of the variation in turnout cannot be explained as a phenomenon of space. We will therefore now have a look at the individual characteristics that are supposed to have facilitating effects. Besides education we include income, sector of employment and age in the analysis. It is obvious that those variables, except for age, cannot have a direct effect on voting behaviour but do rather have an interventional facilitating effect. The status of a person in professional life, indicated by income and sector of employment may as well as education give some hint on the ability of people to deal with abstract problems. Often, social integration is connected to those socio-economic variables as well as to voting behaviour. Age can have both facilitating and mobilising effects. A direct effect can be expected first of all for very old people, who might because of physical inabilities, not only be unable to go to the polls but also be unable to inform themselves about politics. Young eligible voters are usually more mobile which makes mistakes in voter lists or the loss of voting cards more likely. Except for these direct effect of young age a mobilisation effect might arise from the fact, that interest in politics grows with age. Becoming older mostly means being affected by more and more political decisions, or at least becoming aware of the impact politics has on ones own life. It will be returned to mobilisation effects explicitly in the next section.

A short overview over reported behaviour in the three European elections covered by the survey data, is given in tables 15 and 16. The problem of overreported turnout by the respondents becomes obvious here as in most surveys. In the 1994 European elections turnout in Germany was 60 percent, thus overreporting is 13,8 percentage points in 1994. In 1999 45,2 percent of the eligible voters cast their vote, 5,5 percentage points less than in the survey.

Table 15: Recall electoral participation in European elections 1994 and 1999 in percent

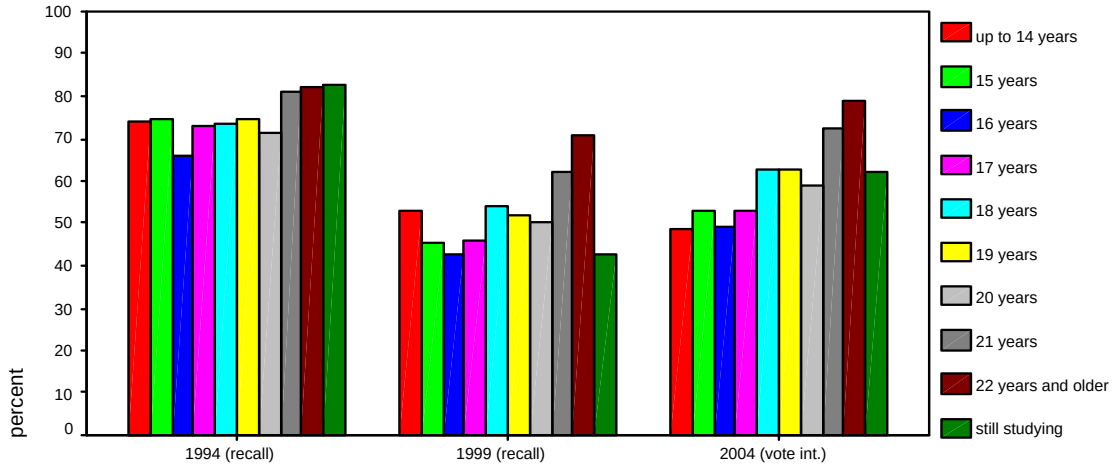
	1994			1999		
	Germany	**West Germany**	**East Germany**	**Germany**	**West Germany**	**East Germany**
Voted	73.8	72.4	79,4	50,7	48,9	57,7
did not vote	23.2	24.6	17,6	40,4	42,5	32,5
can't remember / refused	3.0	3.1	3,0	8,9	8,5	9,9
N	1922	1042	1005	1941	983	1004
actual turnout		60.0			45.2	

Table 16: Intended electoral participation EE 2004 in Germany

	Germany	**West Germany**	**East Germany**
Yes	58.3	58.0	59.4
No	13.6	14.1	11.5
Do not know	28.1	27.9	29.1
N	1919	972	995

The first variable, regarded as facilitation factor, is education. It is operationalised in the Eurobarometer surveys as "age when stopped full time education". That may not seem a satisfactory measure at the national level, however, it makes comparative research easier than with country specific degrees. The graphs for European elections 1994 and 1999 (figures 9 to 11) show that education does not correlate with electoral participation in a strictly linear way: In both years the two categories with the lowest level of formal education showed higher turnout than the next category. An explanation is probably, that generational effects are intertwined with the education variable. Those who left school by an age of 14 are mainly older people who did after World War II not get the chance for higher education. On the other end of the spectrum highly educated people show, in accordance with our hypotheses, higher turnout rates than the middle categories. Special attention has to be turned to those still studying. In 1994 these group had the highest mean turnout rate, while in 1999 it had the lowest. About 50 percent of the students in 1999 did not vote. A glance at figure 11 on intended participation in the European election 2004 shows a more linear relationship with the lowest formal education categories having the lowest mean vote intention figures. The high proportion of "do not know" answers is not surprising as the election concerned will be held in about five years time. Interesting again is the column of the students, about 20 percent of which are clearly saying they do not intend to vote. This cannot be explained by circumstantial abstention, usually relatively high with students, but it seems to have substantial reasons. Also interesting is the fact, that those with low or medium level of formal education are quite undecided.

Figure 8: Electoral participation in European Parliament elections by education

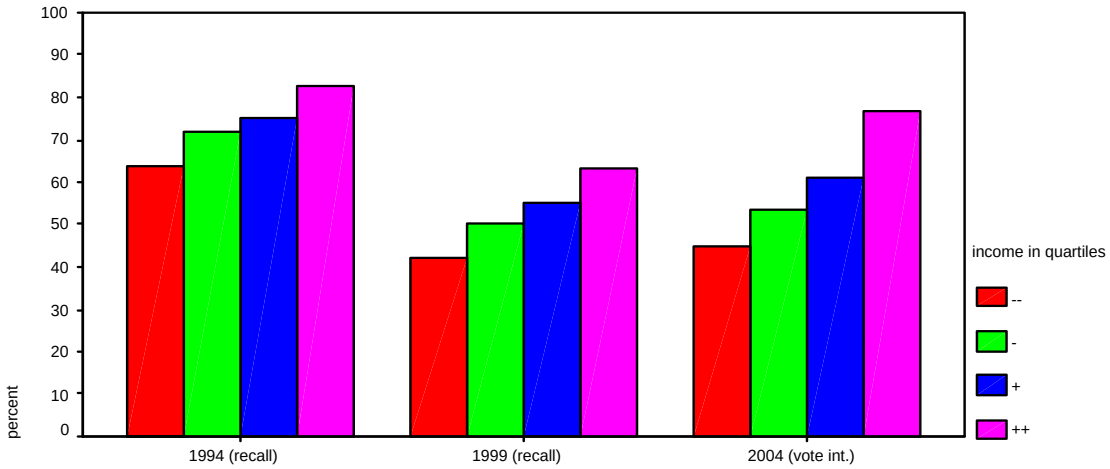


electoral participation European Parliament Election 1994-2004

Income is also an indicator of socio-economic status. It might be a better indicator than education in some respects, e.g. the generational effects on education do not affect the income variable in the same way. Many people from the older generation had the opportunity to make a professional career connected with high income in spite of relatively low formal education.

For income there can be observed a linear relationship with participation, people in the highest income quartile having the highest turnout rates both in 1994 and in 1999 (figures 12 and 13). The same pattern is found for vote intention in the European election 2004 (figure 14).

Figure 9: Electoral participation in European Parliament elections by income

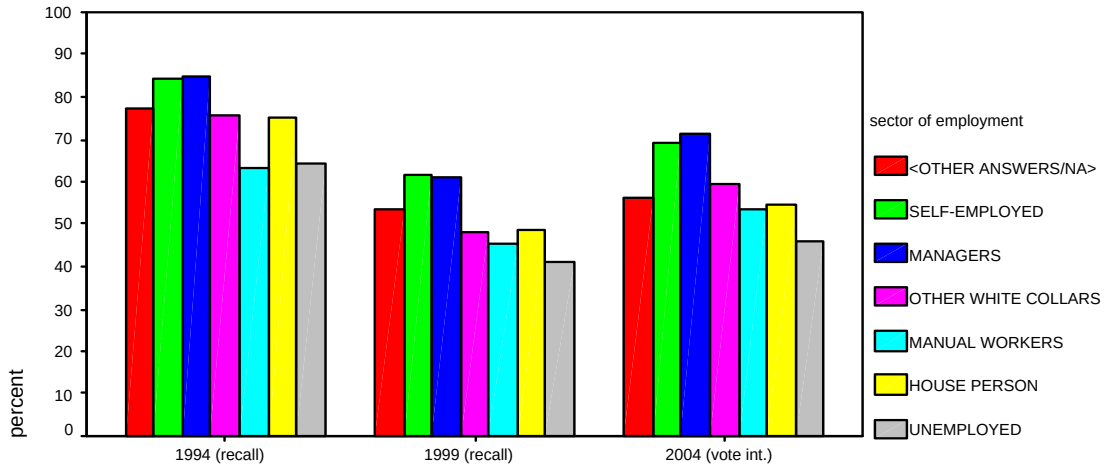


electoral participation European Parliament Election 1994-2004

A third variable indicating socio-economic status is sector of employment (figures 15 to 17). The highest mean turnout is found among the self-employed and managers while

other white collars and, even more, manual workers and unemployed show lower turnout rates. This shows on the one hand an effect of individual facilitation as for example being a manager or being self-employed is an indicator for certain personal characteristics and abilities, on the other hand socio-economic status might also be a sign of individual mobilisation. It can be assumed that self-employed and managers are very well integrated in society, while unemployed and house persons, who both show lower turnout rates might be partly excluded from working life, an important part of social life. However, individual mobilisation will be analysed in the next section.

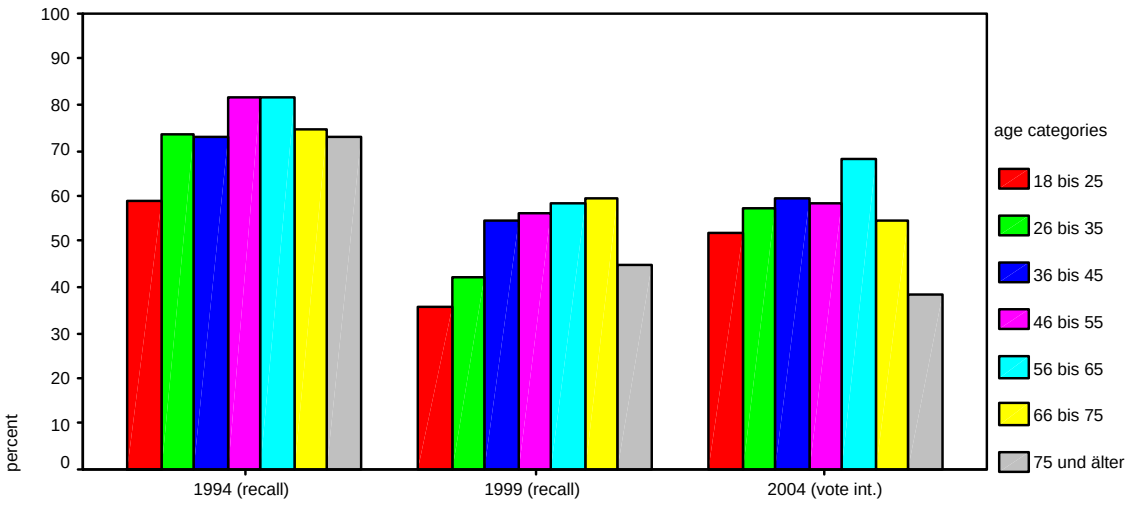
Figure 10: Electoral participation in European Parliament elections by sector of employment



electoral participation European Parliament Election 1994-2004

The facilitation effects of age become obvious in the figures below. As often shown for first order elections a non-linear age effect can be observed in European elections, too. In 1994 as well as in 1999 and 2000 the youngest age group, under 25 years, was on average least likely to vote (figures 18 and 19). Mean turnout rises almost linearly up to an age of 65 in 1994, up to 75 in 1999. It is very likely that the explanation for lower turnout of people older than 75 is physical problems and a consequence of social exclusion of old people. Interesting in the case of the intended participation in the European election in 2004 (figure 20) is the distribution of the “do not know” answers. The proportion of undetermined people is comparatively high among those between 36 and 55 years, a group which showed above average turnout in the last two European elections. This observation shows that the relatively high participation rates of these groups can by no means be taken for granted in the coming election, as well. The high percentage of “do not know” answers in the groups older than 66 years might again be a direct facilitation effect, as those people simply are not sure to be still in good health in about four years time.

Figure 11: Electoral participation in European Parliament election 1994 by age



electoral participation in Europe Parliament elections 1999-2004

4. Individual mobilisation

4.1 Bivariate analysis of individual mobilisation

Voter facilitation is only one aspect of the decision to turn out or to stay home. A preliminary condition is some desire or incentive to vote. The individual has to be convinced of its influence on the outcome, even if this influence might be very limited. This feeling of efficacy is intertwined with general interest and knowledge in politics as well as with party identification. Even if the direct reason to vote for some people is the existence of a party identification, the belief behind that behaviour is, that the individual vote does help 'his/her' party. Further indicators for individual mobilisation are campaign exposure and perceived party differentials.

Mobilisation in this sense therefore means both intrinsic motivation to vote and mobilisation in the more narrow sense of the concern of the parties to convince people to go to the polls, who otherwise stayed at home, by the means of a campaign. From what has been said about individual mobilisation until here it becomes obvious that the effect of individual mobilisation on the decision to participate in an elections has to be based on survey data. The Eurobarometers are a suitable data base as each of them contains many attitudinal variables. Problems with comparability, however, arise because not all indicators were surveyed at all time points.

It would be interesting to distinguish between those who are already mobilised before the election comes over the horizon and those who have nil or very low levels of prior mobilisation and who, therefore, depend on the campaign to move them to go to the polls. This is not an easy task. The variable best suited for discriminating those two groups of eligible

voters might be general interest in politics. However, these indicators were only surveyed in 1994.

Table 17: Interest in politics, 1994

	general interest in politics	interest in EU-politics
not at all	13.4	16.7
not much	46.6	49.9
to some extent	30.9	26.4
a great deal	9.0	7.0
N	1899	1906

Table 18: Knowledge of President of the Commission and national commissioner

	1994	1999
knows none of them	52.6	59.4
knows one of them	22.9	19.8
knows both	24.5	20.8
N	1923	1909

From table 17 one can conclude that 60 percent of the respondents (*not at all* and *not much*) are not interested in politics in general, even more, about 65 percent are uninterested in EU politics. It can be assumed that those figures did not change dramatically since 1994, although due to the lack of these variables that cannot be proofed. A similar picture is provided if one looks at the knowledge about EU personnel: both in 1994 and in 1999 more than half of the respondents did neither know the President of the Commission nor one of the national commissioners (table 18). More than 70 percent of the respondents are moreover not close to any party or are mere sympathizers. If one creates a dichotomous variable of political involvement from the three variables general interest in politics, strength of party identification and knowledge of EU personnel, 34 percent of the respondents in 1994 were classified as not politically involved. In terms of individual mobilisation that means that those 34 percent probably lack an intrinsic motivation to vote and need additional incentives to turn out. That becomes very clear when the correlation between turnout and the dichotomous involvement variable is analysed: Only 58 percent of those not politically involved turned out to participate in the 1994 European election compared to 82 percent of the politically involved respondents. Additional incentives can for example be activation by the parties' campaigns or a very high party differential. A problem for the parties is, however, to reach exactly those people with their campaign, who are not politically involved.

In the following we will therefore examine campaign exposure more closely. The comparison between 1994 and 1999 (table 19) shows a kind of polarisation. In 1999 the share of respondents who were passively reached by the campaign was much lower than in 1994. On the other hand the share of people who did not notice the campaign at all and the share of people who were actively interested in the campaign both were much higher.

Table 19: Campaign Exposure

	1994	1999
None	5.0	11.6
Passive	29.4	13.2
partially active	43.6	47.8
fully active	22.0	27.3
N	1917	1927

Campaigning would be most successful for the parties if they managed to reach those groups of people, that are normally less likely to vote. By looking at the socio-demographic correlates of campaign awareness we can examine if this aim was achieved in the two campaigns. As figures 21 to 23 show only minor differences in the awareness of the campaign by the socio-demographic variables, that does seem to be the case. No socio-demographic group seems to be excluded from campaign information. People older than 66 years are somewhat less aware of the campaign in both years, which is not very surprising, whereas highly educated are somewhat more aware of the campaign. Looking at the professional status and income as well shows only minor differences with slightly higher mean values in the categories that are more interested in politics, as managers or the high income group. This result is not surprising as it is not so much a question of educational or financial resources if a person is exposed to the campaign, rather it is a question of interest if campaign information is just flickering over or if one can recall to have seen, read or heard it.

Figure 12: Mean campaign exposure by age categories in 1994 and 1999

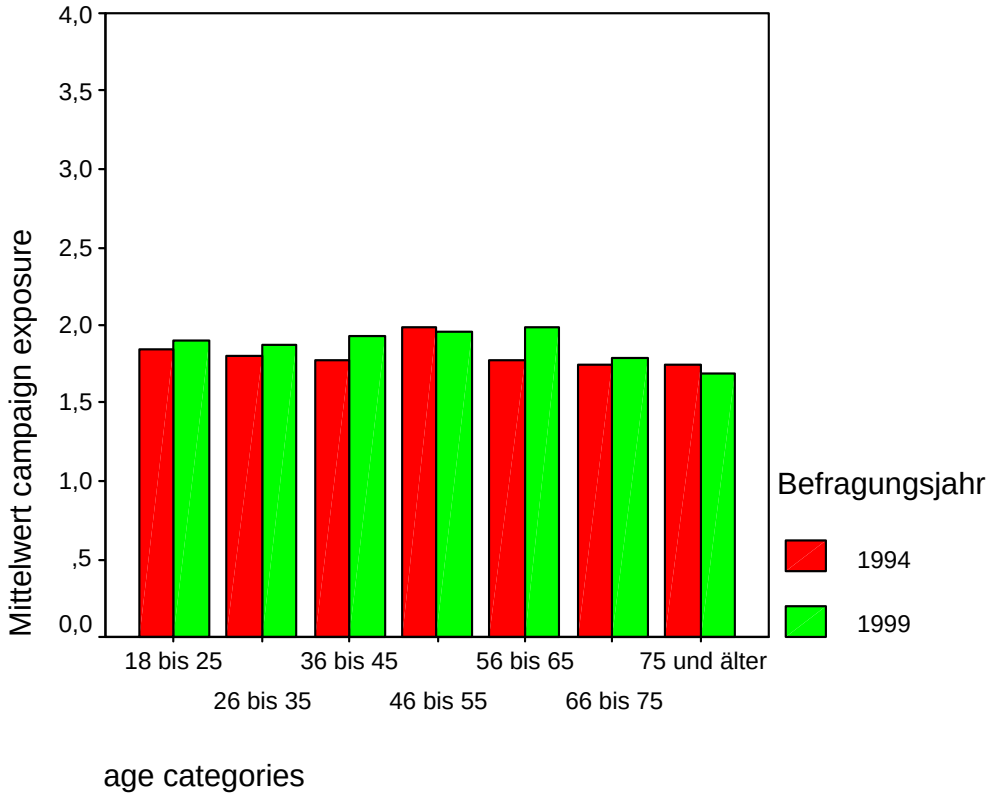


Figure 13: Mean campaign exposure by education (age when stopped full-time education) in 1994 and 1999

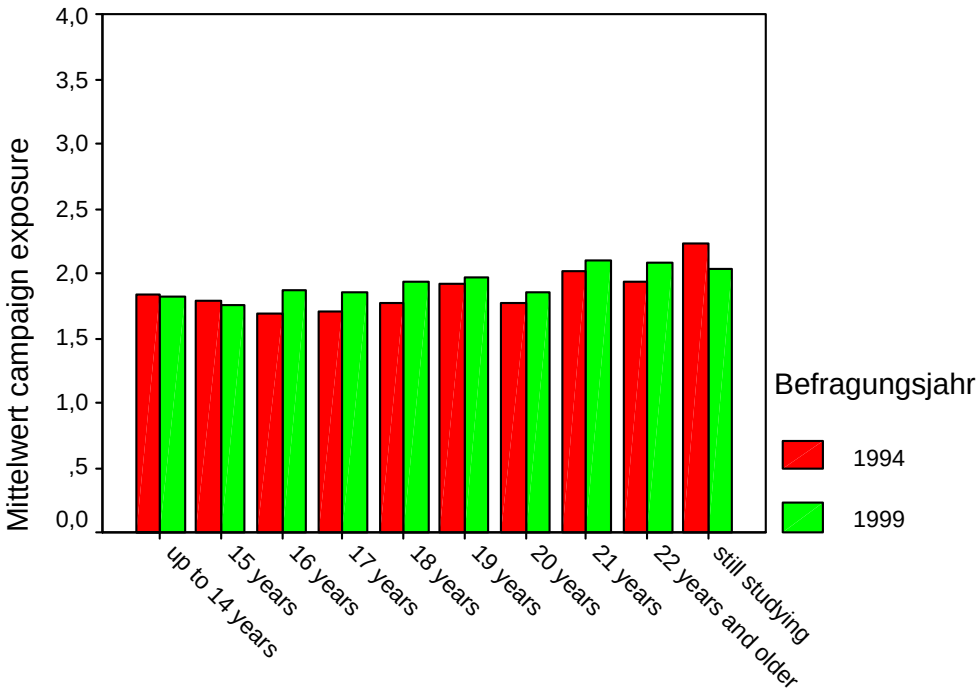


Figure 14: Mean campaign exposure by sector of employment in 1994 and 1999

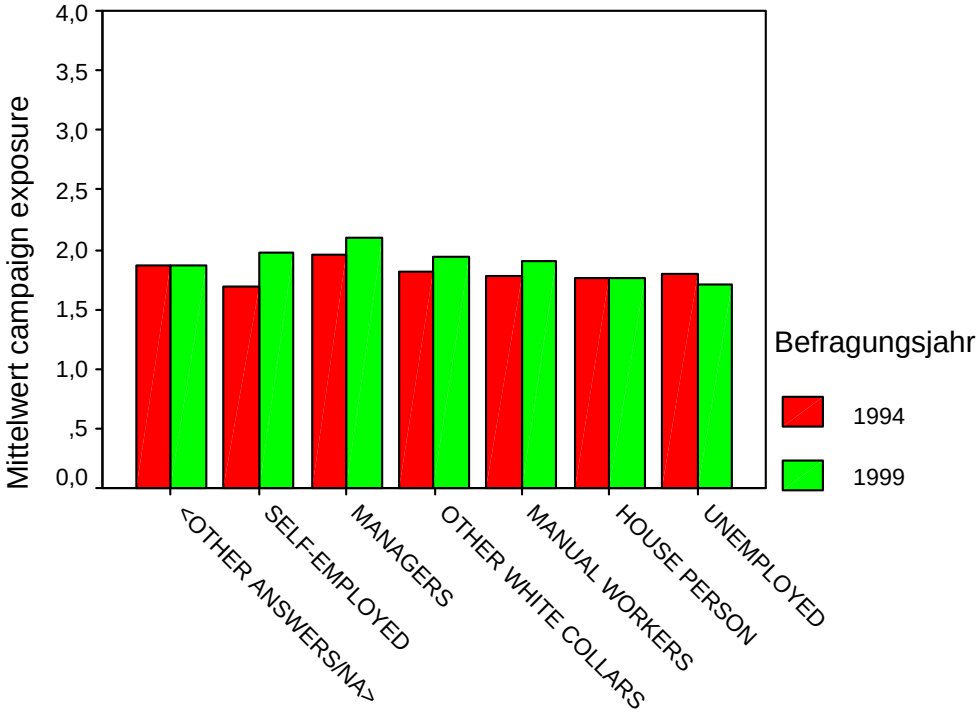
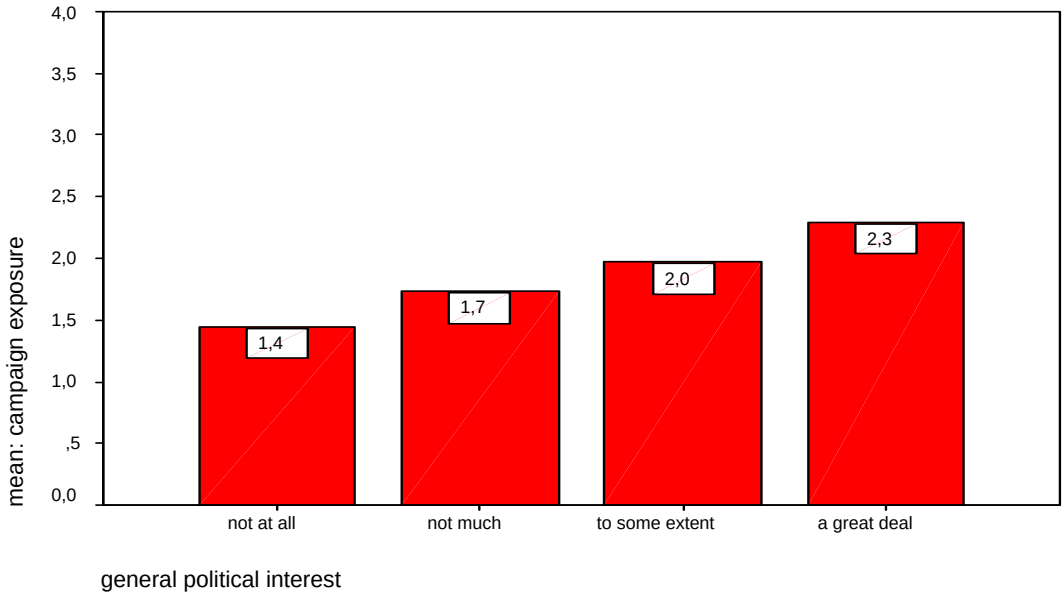


Figure 24, that gives mean values of campaign awareness for different values of general interest in politics suggests, that it is interest that determines if a person notices the campaign more or less intensively. The picture is the same for all the other interest and knowledge indicators available, which are therefore not displayed.

Figure 15: Campaign exposure by political interest, 1994



The crucial question for a successful campaign, however, is if it does in the end change people's behaviour, in this case, if it does boost participation. This is a very difficult question that cannot be answered by the means of survey data alone.

Table 20 shows the cross tabulation of participation in the 1994 European election with the political involvement variable, controlled for campaign exposure. Turnout is clearly rising by campaign awareness from 24 percent among those not involved *and* not aware of any campaign to 68 percent among those not involved but fully aware of the campaign, a difference of 44 percentage points. In the case of the politically involved the turnout difference between the two extreme categories of the campaign variable is only 27 percentage points. To conclude that the campaign has more effect on the uninvolved people, like an alternative pathway hypothesis would suggest, however, is risky. It is impossible to tell, if it is campaign exposure that is causing the difference in turnout or if the awareness of the campaign is just another variable further discriminating those who are socially more integrated and more open to their environment from those who are neither the one nor the other.

Table 20: Participation in European election 1994 by political involvement, controlled for campaign exposure

campaign exposure	participation in European election 1994	Political involvement	
		yes	no
None	voted	63.5	23.7
	did not vote	28.6	65.8
	cannot remember / refused	7.9	10.5
	N	63	38
Passive	voted	74.1	54.8
	did not vote	21.4	41.2
	cannot remember / refused	4.5	4.0
	N	313	250
partially active	voted	83.0	62.8
	did not vote	15.3	34.5
	cannot remember / refused	1.7	2.7
	N	541	296
fully active	voted	90.7	67.6
	did not vote	8.2	27.9
	cannot remember / refused	1.1	4.4
	N	354	68

Unfortunately a comparison between 1994 and 1999 is not possible at this point as the political interest variable was not asked in 1999 in the same form and the strength of party identification was not asked at all.

A factor that may boost individual motivation to vote is the perception of the importance of an election. One aspect of importance is the power of the institution elected, another aspect however, is the difference it makes for the people which party wins or loses, the party differential. In section two we already talked about the first aspect, finding that the perceived power of the national parliament is higher than that of the European Parliament. The effect of the perception of the power of the EP on turnout in European elections is shown in table 21: we can observe that voters judge the EP more powerful than non voters, however the differences in means are only significant in 1999 with a very low explained variance of 1,3 percent.

Table 21: Mean perception of Power of European Parliament and turnout in European elections 1994 and 1999

	1994	1999
Voted	4.92	5.63
did not vote	4.66	5.12
can't remember / refused	4.84	5.36
N	1741	1656

In the following the role of party differentials is examined. Because in Germany the voting system is mainly based on proportional representation, candidates are less important than parties. We therefore confine the analysis to party differentials and do not consider candidate differentials. The 1994 Eurobarometer contains the party differential for European elections as well as for national elections, which enables us to compare the salience of both elections to the electorate. The comparison of the first two columns of table 22

makes clear that the proportion of respondents who have a low party differential in European elections is with 26,4 percent much higher than the proportion of people having a low party differential in national elections. On the other end of the scale, those with a very high party differential, we find a difference of more than 24 percentage points. The 1999 Eurobarometer does only include the party differential for European elections, making a comparison like this impossible. What can, however, be observed, is a shift in the distribution of party differentials from 1994 to 1999 at European elections (compare columns 2 and 3 of table 26). While there are only slightly less people having a very or fairly low party differential, the proportion saying it makes a big difference for them which party wins and loses, falls from about 30 to about 20 percent, clearly not a mobilising factor of the 1999 European Parliament election. Table 27 shows, that party differential is a better prediction variable for turnout than the perception of the power of the EP. The difference in mean values is significant in both years and explained variance is 3,7 percent in 1994 and even 12,2 percent in 1999.

A possible explanation for the greater importance of party differential compared to perception of power of the EP might lie in the second-order election model. Although people might regard the EP as an unimportant institution, it could be crucial to them which party wins or loses as that has a backlash at the national level. So the conclusion 'which party wins does not matter, because the institution elected is not important' is not necessarily right.

Table 22: Party differentials at European Parliament elections and national elections

	1994	1994	1999
	national election	European election	European election
very low	1.8	6.4	3.8
fairly low	7.1	20.0	19.3
fairly high	30.4	35.8	44.2
very high	54.8	30.5	20.6
do not know	5.8	7.3	12.1
N	1919	1921	1934

Table 23: Mean party differential (10 point scale) European Parliament Elections

	1994	1999
Voted	7.28	7.50
did not vote	6.10	5.90
can't remember/ refused	6.28	6.34
N	1781	1700

4.2 Multivariate analysis of individual mobilization

In the previous sections many variables were analyzed in their relation to turnout, most of them showing some correlation in the direction expected from a theoretical point of view. What needs to be done in the next step is a multivariate analysis including all those vari-

ables simultaneously to assess their impact compared to each other and to look for differences regarding the importance of variables between the last two European elections.

As the dependent variable is a dichotomous one, the appropriate method is logistic regression. For this purpose the turnout variable was transformed to a dummy variable, coded one for those who voted and zero for those who did not vote, did not remember their behavior or refused the answer. The variables included are of different measurement levels, from categorical to metric. That is not a problem with logistic regression as non-metric variables can be recoded to dummy variables. What causes some inconvenience, however, is that it becomes difficult to compare the importance of the different independent variables as they are measured on different scales. This problem was solved by transforming the values to a range from zero to one. That means the exponent of B gives the factor by which the odds of voting are increased when moving form the lowest to the highest category of the independent variable.

In table 24 bivariate logistic regressions show how much of the variance can be explained by each variable alone. Nagelkerkes R^2 has a range from zero to one, comparable to R^2 in OLS regression. In addition the classification result shows how many respondents were correctly classified as voters or non-voters respectively after introducing the variable. Both in 1994 and 1999 self placement of the respondents on the left-right scale is not significant, neither in the original form of the variable nor recoded to a variable we labeled “radicalism”. Moreover, the sex of the respondents is of minor importance as well as the fact that a person is retired. Satisfaction with democracy in the EU does not explain much, as well. High potential of explanation of variance have in both years the variables campaign exposure, knowledge of EU-personnel, party differential and the attitude to membership in the EU.

In 1999 some additional variables were included in the analysis, most of them indicators for interest in politics and the EU. Of those frequency of political discussion has the highest value of Nagelkerkes R^2.

That the classification results in 1994 do not change is a first indicator for the fact that the importance of the variables for the decision to vote or not to vote was much lower. The better classification result in 1994 is explained by the fact that without any independent variables the probability of classifying somebody correctly as a voter was much higher because turnout was higher. In 1999 some variables increase the number of cases classified correctly from 50,8 percent without any independent variables by up to 12,9 percentage points, in the case of knowledge of EU personnel. The inclusion of some variables, however, does even reduce the share of rightly classified cases, e.g. left-right self placement or extremism.

Table 24: Bivariate logistic regressions. Dependent variable: turnout in European Parliament elections 1994 and 1999

	1994		1999	
	Nagelkerkes R^2	**Classification result**	**Nagelkerkes R^2**	**Classification result**
Age	0.017***	73.8	0.023***	56.1
Female	0.003*	73.8	0.002	51.9
Education (age at which full time education was completed)	0.009**	73.8	0.013***	55.0
income (in quartiles, mean sub.)	0.028***	73.8	0.024***	53.9
Retired	0.001	73.8	0.004*	51.9
left right self placement (10 point scale, mean sub.)	0	73.8	0	48.0
extremism (derived from left-right scale)	0	73.8	0.001	48.4
knowledge of EU personnel (does not know anybody/ knows either Pres. of Commission or nat. commissioner, knows both)	0.082***	73.8	0.104***	63.7
satisfaction with democracy in EU (5 point scale, mean sub.)	0.007**	73.8	0.005**	50.7
power of European Parliament (10 point scale, mean sub.)	0.003	73.8	0.013***	50.7
attitude to membership in EU (bad thing/neither good nor bad/good thing)	0.068***	73.8	0.075***	62.1
own country benefited from EU	0.033***	73.8	0.050***	59.2
campaign exposure (none/passive/partly active/ fully active)	0.069***	73.9	0.152***	63.0
party differential at EU election (10 point scale, mean sub.)	0.045***	73.8	0.138***	61.6
trust in European Parliament	-		0.046***	59.3
heard of European Parliament	-		0.027***	55.1
European Parliament plays important role in daily life	-		0.031***	57.4
frequency of political discussion	-		0.055***	57.5
frequency of trying to persuade others	-		0.024***	56.6

In table 25 the multiple logistic regressions for 1994 and 1999 are contrasted. In both years it is the same group of variables that contribute significantly to the explanation of turnout, with the exception of education, which was only significant in 1999. From the socio-demographic variables age and income make a contribution to explain turnout (in 1999 education as well). While the effect of age was greater in 1999 than in 1994, the effect of income was reduced, which means that being older increased the probability of turnout more in 1999 than in 1994, while having a high income did not determine the decision to vote as much in 1999 as in 1994. Education was included in 1999 at the last step increasing the odds of voting only slightly by a factor of 1.5 when moving from the lowest to the highest education category.

A look at the attitudinal variables shows that in 1994 being aware of the campaign increased the odds of voting by the highest factor, followed by knowledge on EU personnel and a positive attitude to membership of one's own country in the EU. High party differential is contributing less power of explanation than all other variables.

The comparison of 1994 and 1999 reveals some interesting displacements in the importance of the different attitudinal variables to explain turnout. Having a high party differential became much more important with an exponent of B more than five times as high as in 1994. The influence of campaign exposure rose, as well, while knowledge of EU-personnel and the attitude to membership in the EU both had smaller effects on the decision to turn out.

If the additional variables are included in the logistic regression as done in table 30, the basic pattern is not fundamentally changed. The only variable included additionally is frequency of political discussion, an indicator for interest in politics. Not surprisingly this reduces the effects of age, income, knowledge and campaign exposure slightly, as those variables are closely related to interest, as well. Education, which obviously is a proxy for political interest, is even removed from the analysis, substituted by the more direct measurement frequency of political discussion. The effects of the attitude to the EU and party differential are increased marginally.

How can all these results be interpreted in terms of individual facilitation and mobilisation? The two variables that clearly are mobilisation factors are campaign exposure and party differential. Both of them were much more important in 1999, which leads to the conclusion that mobilisation was the crucial determinant in 1999. The inclusion of education and the greater importance of age might point in the same direction: the lower educated and the younger eligible voters who are harder to mobilise could not be reached in 1999.

Table 25: Multivariate stepwise logistic regressions. Dependent variable: turnout in European Parliament elections 1994 and 1999

	1994				1999			
Variables in the regression:	**B**	**Exp(B)**	**entered on step**	**Classifi-cation result**	**B**	**Exp(B)**	**entered on step**	**Classifi-cation result**
Age	1.389***	4.010	4	75.8	1.882***	6.565	4	70.5
female	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
education (age at which full time education was com-pleted)	-	-	-	-	.383*	1.467	7	71.5
income (in quartiles, mean sub.)	.802***	2.230	5	75.7	.507**	1.661	6	71.5
Retired	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Left right self placement (10 point scale, mean sub.)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
extremism (derived from left-right scale)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
knowledge of EU personnel (does not know anybody/ knows either Pres. of Commission or nat. commissioner, knows both)	1.204***	3.335	1	73.8	.917***	2.501	3	68.5
satisfaction with democracy in EU (5 point scale, mean sub.)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
power of EP (10 point scale, mean sub.)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
attitude to membership in EU (bad thing/neither good nor bad/good thing)	1.069***	2.913	2	75.1	.792***	2.208	5	70.1
own country benefited from EU	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
campaign exposure (none/passive/partly active/ fully active)	1.463***	4.320	3	75.4	2.021***	7.545	1	63.0
party differential EU elections (10 point scale, mean sub.)	.743***	2.101	6	75.5	2.490***	12.065	2	67.2
Constant	2.276***				-4.747***			
	Nagelkerkes R-Quadrat: 0.214				Nagelkerkes R-Quadrat: 0.327			

Table 26: Multivariate stepwise logistic regressions. Dependent variable: turnout in European Parliament election 1999, without and with additional independent variables

	1999				1999			
Variables in the regression:	**B**	**Exp(B)**	**entered on step**	**classification result**	**B**	**Exp(B)**	**entered on step**	**classification result**
Age	1.882***	6.565	4	70,5	1,711***	5,533	4	70,5
female	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
education (age at which full time education was completed)	.383*	1.467	7	71,5	-	-	-	-
income (in quartiles, mean sub.)	.507**	1.661	6	71,5	,504**	1,655	7	71,0
Retired	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
left right self placement (10 point scale, mean sub.)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
extremism (derived from left-right scale)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
knowledge of EU personnel (does not know anybody/ knows either Pres. of Commission or nat. commissioner, knows both)	.917***	2.501	3	68,5	,881***	2,414	3	68,5
satisfaction with democracy in EU (5 point scale, mean sub.)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
power of European Parliament (10 point scale, mean sub.)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
attitude to membership in EU (bad thing/neither good nor bad/good thing)	.792***	2.208	5	70,1	,795***	2,214	5	70,1
own country benefited from EU	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
campaign exposure (none/passive/partly active/ fully active)	2.021***	7.545	1	63,0	1,922***	6,837	1	63,0
party differential EU elections (10 point scale, mean sub.)	2.490***	12.065	2	67,2	2,512***	12,327	2	67,2
trust in EP	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
heard of EP	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
EP plays important role in daily life	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
frequency of political discussion	-	-	-	-	,701**	2,015	6	70,6
frequ. of trying to persuade others	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Constant	-4.747***	-	-	-	-4,781***	-	-	-
	Nagelkerkes R-Quadrat: 0.327				Nagelkerkes R-Quadrat: 0.330			

Tables 27 to 29 show the results of logistic regressions for turnout in federal elections. As with turnout in European elections the first step was to calculate bivariate logistic regressions, which give the power of explanation of each single variable (table 27). One might wonder why variables with reference to Europe were included. It is obviously not important to know the Commissioners for Germany in the European Commission if the body that is voted is the national parliament. However, it is interesting to see if those who are well informed about the European arena are those who vote in federal elections, as well. As in European elections interest in politics (interest in politics in general in 1994, frequency of political discussion in 1999 and 2000) is the variable best suited to explain turnout in national elections, too. This finding is supported by looking at the indicators for knowledge and campaign exposure, both indicators for political interest as well. Socio-demographic variables clearly contribute less to explain if a person votes or not. It is interesting that the Nagelkerkes R^2 for age is about the same for participation in the national election of 1990 like for participation in the European elections, but it has very limited influence on the vote intention in national elections. Education seems to be more important in the European context as well as income.

In tables 28 and 29 there are displayed the results of stepwise logistic regressions for participation in federal elections.

Comparing the stepwise logistic regressions for European and federal elections shows that Nagelkerkes R square is higher for European elections. Not surprising is that it is again interest in politics that is introduced on the first step. Campaign exposure is, at least in 1994, a good indicator as well. It is remarkable that with the vote intention for federal election 1994 the attitude to the question if Germany benefited from being member of the EU is the second one included in the regression, because it is not at all in the other three stepwise regressions for turnout in federal elections.

The comparison of the logistic regressions is difficult because of various reasons. First, we do not have the same variables for all years, second, we compare recall of participation (federal election 1990, European Elections) with vote intentions (for federal elections 1994 and 2002), third, the time distances to the elections differ extremely. Those difficulties in mind, a conclusion is, that interest is the most important predictor of turnout in both types of elections, European and national. Attitudes to the EU and European integration, measured by the membership and the benefit questions, seem to be less important. Diffuse support, expressed by saying membership is a good thing, seems to play a more important role than a calculation of costs and benefits that might stand behind the benefit question.

Table 27: Bivariate logistic regressions, federal elections (white cells means that variable did not exist in that survey)

	1994, recall		1994, vote int.		1999, vote int.		2000 ,vote int.	
	Nagel-kerkes R^2	Classify-cation result	Nagel-kerkes R^2	Classifi-cation result	Nagel-kerkes R^2	Classif-ication result	Nagel-kerkes R^2	Classif-ication result
Age	0.029***	85.3	0.001	76.2	0	68.1	0.003	66.9
Female	0	85.3	0.001	76.2	0	68.1	0	66.9
education (age at which full time education was completed)	0.001	85.3	0.003	76.2	0.004*	68.1	0.013***	66.9
income (in quartiles, mean sub.)	0.024***	85.3	0.020***	76.2	0.003*	68.1	0.007***	66.9
Retired	0.004*	85.3	0	76.2	0	68.1	0	66.9
left right self placement (10 point scale, mean sub.)	0	85.3	0	76.2	0.005*	68.1	0.001	66.9
radicalism (derived from left-right scale)	0	85.3	0.014***	76.2	0.029***	68.1	0.015***	66.9
knowledge of EU personnel (does not know anybody/ knows either Pres. of Commission or nat. commissioner, knows both)	0.042***	85.3	0.040***	76.2	0.043***	68.1		
satisfaction with democracy in EU (5 point scale, mean sub.)	0	85.3	0.010***	76.2	0.002	68.1	0.005**	66.9
power of European Parliament	0.001	85.3	0	76.2	0.001	68.1		
attitude to membership in EU (bad thing/neither good nor bad/good thing)	0.024***	85.3	0.022***	76.2	0.031***	68.1	0.019***	66.9
own country benefited from EU	0.015***	85.3	0.041***	76.2	0.033***	68.1	0.019***	66.9
campaign exposure (none/passive/partly active/ fully active)	0.058***	85.3	0.035***	76.2	0.035***	68.1		
party differential at EU election (10 point scale, mean sub.)	0.015***	85.3	0.004*	76.2	0.026***	68.2		
party differential at national election (10 point scale, mean sub.)	0.022***	85.3	0.014***	76.2				
interest in politics in general (4 point scale)	0.062***	85.3	0.053***	76.2				
frequency of political discussion (never, occasionally, frequently)					0.040***	68.1	0.032***	66.9
knowledge of national personnel (does not know anybody/ knows either nat. minister of fi-nance or nat. foreign minister, knows both)	0.035***	85.3	0.035***	76.2	0.035***	68.1		
satisfaction with democracy in Germany (5 point scale, mean sub.)	0	85.3	0.011***	76.8	0.010***	68.1	0.030***	66.9

Table 28: Multivariate stepwise logistic Regression, federal elections (white cells means that variable did not exist in that survey)

	1994 (recall)				1994 (vote intention)			
	B	**Exp(B)**	**Entered on step**	**Classifi-Cation result**	**B**	**Exp(B)**	**Entered on step**	**Classifi-cation result**
Age	1.986***	7.290	3	85,3	-	-	-	-
Female	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
education (age at which full time education was completed)	-	-	-	-	-,443*	,642	8	77,3
Income (in quartiles, mean sub.)	.776**	2.173	5	85,4	,509**	1,663	6	76,6
Retired	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
left right self placement (10 point scale, mean sub.)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Radicalism (derived from left-right scale)	-	-	-	-	,766**	2,150	5	76,8
knowledge of EU personnel (does not know anybody/ knows either Pres. of Commission or nat. commissioner, knows both)	.681**	1.975	4	85,5	,444*	1,558	7	76,8
satisfaction with democracy in EU (5 point scale, mean sub.)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
power of European Parliament	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
attitude to membership in EU (bad thing/neither good nor bad/good thing)	.465*	1.591	7	85,8	-	-	-	-
own country benefited from EU	-	-	-	-	,630***	1,878	2	76,8
campaign exposure (none/passive/partly active/ fully active)	1.398***	4.045	2	85,3	,944***	2,570	3	77,1
party differential at EU election (10 point scale, mean sub.)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
party differential at national election (10 point scale, mean sub.)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
interest in politics in general (4 point scale)	.999**	2.716	1	85,3	,820**	2,271	1	76,8
frequency of political discussion (never, occasionally, frequently)								
knowledge of national personnel (does not know anybody/ knows either nat. minister of finance or nat. foreign minister, knows both)	.449*	1.567	6	85,7	,545**	1,724	4	76,9
satisfaction with democracy in Germany (5 point scale, mean sub.)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Constant	-1.475***				-,808***	,446		
	Nagelkerkes R^2 0.162				**Nagelkerkes R^2 0.130**			

Table 29: Multivariate stepwise logistic Regression, federal elections (white cells means that variable did not exist in that survey)

	federal election 1999 (vote intention)				federal election 2000 (vote intention)			
	B	**Exp(B)**	**Entered on step**	**Classifi-Cation result**	**B**	**Exp(B)**	**Entered on step**	**Classify-cation result**
Age	-	-	-	-	,796**	2,217	5	66,0
Female	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
education (age at which full time education was completed)	-	-	-	-	,466**	1,593	6	66,9
income (in quartiles, mean sub.)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Retired	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
left right self placement (10 point scale, mean sub.)	.893**	2.444	6	68,5	-	-	-	-
Radicalism (derived from left-right scale)	1.330***	3.780	3	67,4	,910***	2,484	3	66,5
knowledge of EU personnel (does not know anybody/ knows either Pres. of Commission or nat. commissioner, knows both)	.439**	1.551	1	68,1				
satisfaction with democracy in EU (5 point scale, mean sub.)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
power of European Parliament	-	-	-	-				
attitude to membership in EU (bad thing/neither good nor bad/good thing)	.581***	1.787	4	67,6	,351*	1,420	4	66,0
own country benefited from EU	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
campaign exposure (none/passive/partly active/ fully active)	.557**	1.745	5	68,2				
party differential at EU election (10 point scale, mean sub.)	.589*	1.802	8	69,0				
party differential at national election (10 point scale, mean sub.)								
interest in politics in general (4 point scale)								
frequency of political discussion (never, occasionally, frequently)	.918***	2.505	2	68,1	,953***	2,593	1	66,9
knowledge of national personnel (does not know anybody/ knows either nat. minister of finance or nat. foreign minister, knows both)	.334*	1.397	9	68,8				
satisfaction with democracy in Germany (5 point scale, mean sub.)	.570**	1.769	7	68,8	1,043***	2,839	2	66,7
Constant	-2.165***				-1,236***			
	Nagelkerkes R^2 0.140				**Nagelkerkes R^2 0.087**			

For a further analysis of the reasons of differential turnout another study, the Asia-Europe survey (ASES), might provide additional clues. The survey was conducted in 18 countries, half of which were in Europe, including 1025 German respondents. The respondents were not asked about their voting behavior in a certain election. Instead three more general questions were asked, of which the dependent variables in the following are derived: frequency of voting at federal, European and local elections. The question design of the turnout questions in this study is rather crude, because the last of the three questions, which in most other countries referred to local elections addresses both local and state elections in the German case. For the analysis of multi-level turnout one would have wished a clearer distinction, however electoral behavior was not the actual concern of the Asia-Europe survey. Respondents were given five answer categories from 'voted in almost all of them' to 'never voted in … election'. This question design is suitable for tracing the causes of differential turnout, because it addresses participation in a more general way than the usual recall or vote intention questions, thereby avoiding the problems arising of circumstantial abstention in a single election. From those three questions three voter types were identified: non-voters (n=226), voters in local and federal elections (n=165) and voters in local, federal and European elections (n=517). Respondents were coded as voters very restrictively, only if they said, they had voted in almost all of them. Of course, one could imagine other types, however, these turned out to be empirically relevant. For the logistic regressions three different dependent variables were computed and used for the different models in table 34. In the first model those voting in local (local and state elections) and federal elections are contrasted to non-voters. In the second model people voting in local and federal elections only are compared with respondents voting in all elections, local, federal *and* European. In the third model, the dependent variable splits non-voters and voters in all elections.

This approach enables to look for social characteristics and attitudes that distinguish the voter types.

In table 30 the R squares of bivariate regressions are shown. While the free rider abstention is the variable best discriminating between non-voters and voters at local and federal level (model 1), in the other two models it is the duty to vote. The results of the multivariate logistic regressions in table 31 are revealing some interesting details. First, as the Nagelkerkes R^2 shows, it is hardly possible to explain why people who voted in almost all local and federal elections did not vote in European elections (model 2). The most important variable in that respect is the acceptance of voting as a citizen's duty. Only one other variable is significant, which is the consumption of national media. In model 1, which compares voters at local and federal elections to non-voters, the variable first entered is free-rider abstention, the approval of the statement "since so many people vote in elections, it really doesn't matter whether I vote or not", followed by interest in politics, age and the existence of a PID. However, the second column, which gives the factor by which the probability of voting in local and federal elections increases by moving to the highest category of the independent variable, shows that age, interest in politics and the duty to vote are the most important variables in model 1. Nagelkerkes R^2 is, not surprisingly, much higher than for model 2, but somewhat lower than for model 3, in which non-voters and

voters at all levels are compared. While the significant variables and their coefficients in model 3 are similar to model 1, some differences can be found. The duty to vote, entered on the first step here, existence of PID and education do contribute more to distinguish these two groups than those from model 1, while age is less important.

What becomes quite clear from the three models is, that the mobilizing factor for participation in European elections is the involvement in politics, indicated by a higher coefficient for PID in model 3 compared to model 1and by the fact, that attention to national media is significant here as well. Most important for participation in European elections, however, is the feeling of duty to vote.

Table 30: Bivariate logistic regressions of voter turnout at federal, local and European level

	Model 1 (local, federal vs. non-voters)		**Model 2 (local, federal vs. local, federal *and* European elections)**		**Model 3 (voters in local, federal and European elections s. non-voters)**	
	Nagel-kerkes R^2	**Classifi-cation result**	**Nagel-kerkes R^2**	**Classifi-cation result**	**Nagel-kerkes R^2**	**Classifi-cation result**
Age	.106***	62.7	0	75.8	.093***	69.6
Female	.001	57.8	.002	75.8	0	69.6
Education	.046***	60.1	.005	75.8	.071***	69.9
Single	.001	57.8	.002	75.8	.005	69.6
Partner	.021*	57.8	0	75.8	.024***	69.6
Full time employment	.001	57.8	0	75.8	.001	69.6
Part time employment	0	57.8	0	75.8	0	69.9
Retired	.054***	62.4	.002	75.8	.066***	69.6
Student	.004	57.8	0	75.8	.003	69.6
Church attendance	.041***	60.1	.002	75.8	.055	69.6
Interest in Politics	.207***	67.0	.022**	75.8	.283***	74.2
Left-right-Placement	0	57.8	.001	75.8	.001	69.6
Importance left-right	.040**	58.6	.009*	75.8	.078***	69.6
Knowledge National politics	.105***	57.8	.002	75.8	.078***	69.6
Knowledge International Politics	.070***	61.1	.005	75.8	.106***	71.7
Existence PID	.166***	67.3	.003	75.8	.200***	73.4
Local media	.166***	66.5	.002	75.8	.191***	73.8
National Media	.088***	64.2	.019**	75.8	.172***	69.6
International Media	.009	58.8	.001	75.8	.015***	69.6
English	.021*	57.0	.001	75.8	.012*	69.6
Duty to vote	.133***	65.0	.070***	75.7	.320***	78.6
Free rider Abstention	.239***	66.5	.006	75.8	.258***	73.8

Table 31: Multivariate stepwise logistic regressions of voter turnout at federal, European and local elections

	Model 1 (local, federal vs. non-voters)			**Model 2** (local, federal vs. local, federal *and* European elections)			**Model 3** (voters in local, federal and European elections vs. non-voters)		
Variables in the regression:	**B**	**Exp(**	**Entered on step**	**B**	**Exp(**	**Entered on step**	**B**	**Exp(**	**Entered on step**
Age	2.898	18.13	3	-	-	-	2.135	8.458	5
Female	-	-	-	-	-	-	.792	2.209	6
Education	1.295	3.652	7	-	-	-	1.495	4.460	8
Single	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Partner	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Full time employment	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Part time employment	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Retired	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Student	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Church attendance	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Interest in politics	1.926	6.864	2	-	-	-	1.884	6.582	2
Left-right-Placement	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Importance left-right	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Knowledge nat. Politics	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Knowledge International Politics	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Existence PID	.955	2.599	4	-	-	-	1.261	3.528	3
Local media	.726	2.066	6	-	-	-	.551	1.735	9
National media	-	-	-	.402	1.495	2	.488	1.629	7
International Media	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
English	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Duty to vote	1.674	5.334	5	2.026	7.586	1	2.770	15.96	1
Free rider Abstention	-2.899	.055	1	-	-	-	-2.650	.071	4
Constant	-4.094	.017	-	-.651	.522	-	-4.558	.010	-
Nagelkerkes R^2	.497			.079			.587		

Table 32: Multivariate stepwise logistic regressions of voter turnout at federal, European and local elections (Variante mit EU-Variablen)

	Model 1 (local, federal vs. non-voters)			**Model 2** (local, federal vs. local, federal a *nd* European elections)			**Model 3** (voters in local, federal and European elections vs. non-voters)		
Variables in the regression:	**B**	**Exp (B)**	**Entered on step**	**B**	**Exp (B)**	**Entered on step**	**B**	**Exp (B)**	**Entered on step**
Age	2.898	18.13	3	-	-	-	2.135	8.458	5
Female	-	-	-	-	-	-	.792	2.209	6
Education	1.295	3.652	7	-	-	-	1.495	4.460	8
Single	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Partner	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Full time employment	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Part time employment	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Retired	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Student	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Church attendance	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Interest in Politics	1.926	6.864	2	-	-	-	1.884	6.582	2
Left-right-Placement	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Importance left-right	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Knowledge nat. Politics	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Knowledge international politics	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Existence PID	.955	2.599	4	-	-	-	1.261	3.528	3
Local media	.726	2.066	6	-	-	-	.551	1.735	9
National media	-	-	-	-	-	-	.488	1.629	7
International Media	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
English	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Duty to vote	1.674	5.334	5	1.964	7.130	1	2.770	15.96	1
Free rider Abstention	-2.899	.055	1	-	-	-	-2.650	.071	4
Confidence in EU	-	-	-	.776	2.172	3	-	-	-
EU effects daily Life	-	-	-	.673	1.961	2	-	-	-
Constant	-4.094	.017	-	-.651	.522	-	-4.558	.010	-
Nagelkerkes R^2	.497			.091			.587		

5. Conclusion

In this chapter it once more proved true that the turnout puzzle has too many pieces to be fixed completely. We will summarize what the data told us, referring to the four different aspects of turnout that were explicated in the introduction.

Differences in turnout rates between levels of governance are a well known phenomenon, usually explained by the second-order election model. However, that model does not specify *why* a certain election type is second-order. It rather talks about the consequences of the general perception that less is at stake in certain types of elections. The consequences predicted by the second-order model were confirmed by the ECOL analysis in this chapter. The concepts of facilitation and mobilization were proposed in this book as possible explanations that can tell us more about why people do perceive European Parliament elections as less important. Facilitation, however, can only be a meaningful explanation if there is variation. Within Germany this variation is limited, as the electoral rules are, if not the same, quite similar. Mobilization in the rather broad definition seems to be better suited for explaining differences in turnout between levels. For the individual decision to turn out, the voters might not calculate costs and benefits explicitly, however, they do ask themselves, what they are to decide on and if it matters to them what alternative will be chosen. In the case of European elections, many people do not know much about what the parliament does, however, they do know or feel that it has less power than the Bundestag. As parties do not polarize about European questions even in campaigns, voters do not anticipate any big difference between one party winning or the other. Consequently, individual data analysis showed that it is even for the voters in European elections not the special interest in EU-politics, but a feeling of a duty to vote, in the best case to support the system in general, that mobilizes them.

Development of turnout over time was mainly discussed in this chapter in a descriptive manner. The regression analysis showed that we can talk about a decline of turnout, at least in West-Germany. For East-Germany simultaneous elections and the short time period cause problems in assessing a trend, especially for European elections. The survey data give some evidence that a rather unexciting and not very polarizing campaign like in the course of the 1999 European election does contribute to low participation rates.

For analysing turnout in geographical terms Germany provides an interesting, but also difficult case. Interesting, because of the heterogeneity of the country in terms of economic development, political history and present political situation, difficult, because federalism produces many different settings for a certain election in different states. Simultaneous elections are the most obvious case, the existence of two different party systems in West- and East-Germany, however, might have some influence on turnout as well as different power constellations between the parties in the states. This causes problems for analysing turnout with aggregate data, because those variations in settings had to be included. That more effort is needed to capture those variation becomes obvious when dummy variables for states do contribute substantially to explain variance of turnout. In some respects the German case resembles more a comparative study in itself. For im-

proving the explanation of turnout by aggregate data we therefore might need to incorporate indicators developed in comparative studies.

The last aspect of turnout is probably the one that has been studied most in recent years: correlates of turnout at the individual level. The results of that previous research are confirmed here in large parts. While socio-demographics like age, income and education, that in many respects have facilitating effects, do contribute some explanatory power, the more direct reason to participate in elections is interest in politics coming along with knowledge and the feeling of efficacy. To identify the characteristics of voters in European elections, however, proves a difficult task. The data available are not perfectly suited as the Eurobarometers hardly contain any vote intention other than for European and sometimes federal elections. In the ASES data set indicators for interest in EU politics and attitudes to the EU are rare. However, with these restrictions in mind, the ASES survey reveals an interesting finding. A feeling of a duty to vote and consumption of national media, which might be a proxy for interest in more than only the immediate surroundings in the local area, are the only characteristics that distinguish voters in European elections from non-voters in European elections. However, the conclusion that voters in European elections do not vote because of an interest in European issues, but more or less because of a sense of duty, might be too premature as those attitudes towards Europe could not be included. There remain many pieces of the puzzle to be fixed!

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Map 3: Clusters, resulting from the factor analysis of the dimensions of turnout 13

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[1] Only West-Germany
[2] REP did not run in 1999